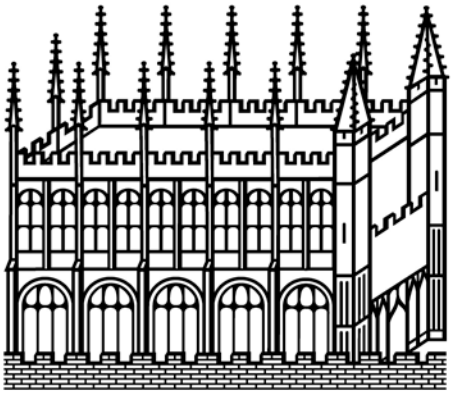

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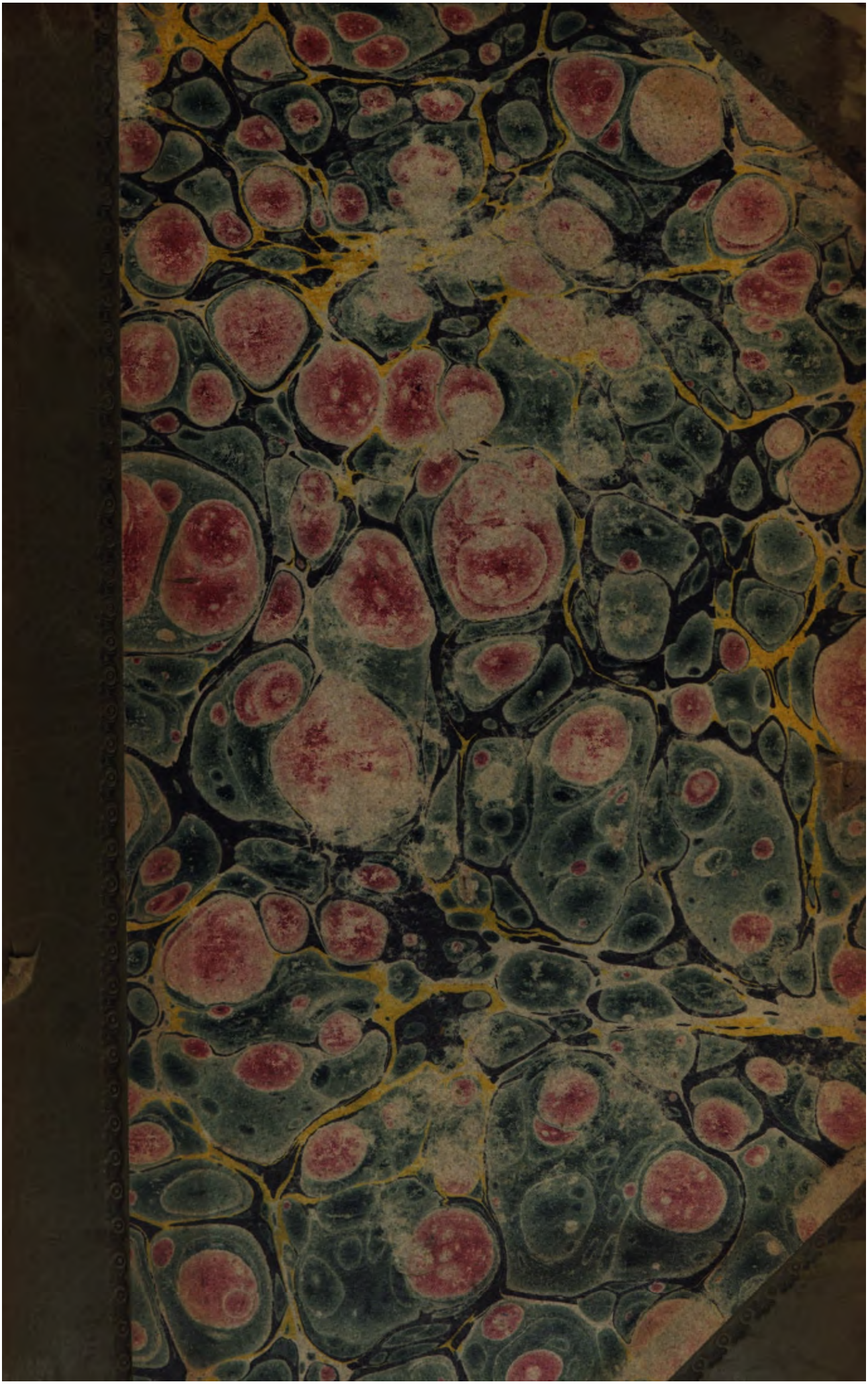

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NEW ENGLAND

AND

HER INSTITUTIONS.

SEELEYS, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

NEW ENGLAND,

AND

HER INSTITUTIONS:

BY ONE OF HER SONS.

PUBLISHED BY R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE:
AND SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY AND SONS,
FLEET STREET, LONDON.
MDCCCXXXV.

306.

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NEW ENGLAND has often been described by Foreigners. The man who drives through the country in a stage coach, can at best give but a superficial view. The writer of these pages has endeavoured, neither to satirize nor to eulogize, but faithfully to describe. He can see much in his native land to love, and not a little to deplore. If these delineations shall make the inhabitants of New England more rightly prize their institutions, or shall communicate to the inquiring elsewhere, correct information respecting our country, the object of the writer will be attained.

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NEW ENGLAND,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE FARMER.

A FEW years since, I was travelling in the western part of one of the New England states; a small party of us, consisting of two gentlemen and three ladies, had taken a carriage and two horses for a pleasure jaunt among the distant hills and forests of our youthful country. As we rode on day after day, leaving behind us the flourishing villages and well-cultivated fields which border the sea-coast, the country continually assumed more of wildness and sublimity. Occasionally we would cross a stream, upon which was erected a saw and grist mill, and a few houses clustered around. Then we would ride for miles, and see not a dwelling or a fence. The whole face of nature was as uncultivated, as when none but the Indian ranged through its wilds. At one time our road was skirted for miles with a forest of dead trees. The

fire which is almost every autumn kindled in the woods by the gun of the hunter, or the burnings of the settler, had swept through it, destroyed, and erased every sign of vegetation. The bare and barkless branches of the trees rose ninety or a hundred feet from the ground, and presented an aspect of desolation which is inconceivable till witnessed. Till you had become familiar with the scene, you would as soon think of indulging in mirth by the side of your father's coffin, as to smile in the midst of this appalling death of nature. Again emerging from this dreary desolation, a forest of majestic pines rose upon the view, thrusting their evergreen heads to the skies, and whispering in that mournful voice which none can understand, but those who have passed a pensive hour of a summer's day, reclining under their cool shade. Again, the oak, the beech, the maple, luxuriant and verdant, cheered the eye and rejoiced the heart. At intervals of a few miles, the log-house of some enterprising settler would attract the eye, as we rode along, feasting upon the novelty of the scenes before us, till we came suddenly to the borders of a beautiful pond; which was literally encircled with mountains, from whose distant and rocky summits the land gradually sloped to the margin of the water. As we ascended the hill, from whose summit we looked down upon the beautiful valley, in which this pond was embosomed, comfortable houses, and well-cultivated fields, and flourishing orchards rose as by magic upon the eye. Far away upon a gentle eminence on the opposite

side of the water, we beheld the neatly-painted church, with the cheerful dwelling of the loved pastor of the people by its side. From the position we then were in, the eye embraced the whole valley, though many miles in extent. I had never seen a spot which was so perfectly excluded from the rest of the world. *It was the end of the road.* We had now entered a region of comfort, intelligence, and refinement. Neatly painted houses with venetian blinds, led us to anticipate a degree of hospitality and of home comforts, which we found more than realized. Here we passed several days, rambling about the margin of the pond, and over the neighbouring hills, and occasionally following the course of the beautiful rivulets sparkling with trout, which trickled from the mountains, and meandered through the valley.

One afternoon, our party were invited to take tea with a neighbouring farmer. We took an early dinner, (our English reader will smile at the hour,) at eleven o'clock in the forenoon. We then entered our carriage, and started upon a ride of five miles to spend the afternoon, and take an early cup of tea with our friend. We had not rode far, before we beheld the vapours gathering upon the side of the mountain, in the form of a thick and black cloud. Soon it broke away from the attraction by which it had been held, and was borne as by an invisible hand across the valley, emptying its treasures of moisture upon the ten thousand blades of grass and flowers of the field which were looking to God for this refreshing. You could not resist the impression

that it was an immense water-vessel, with which God was reviving the fields. The cloud might perhaps have covered a circle of a mile in diameter. Over all the rest of the valley the sun was brightly shining. This cloud passed over the fields, did its appointed work, and disappeared. The same invisible hand fashioned another, and bore it along to give freshness to the verdure of other parts of this beauteous scene. We stopped in admiration to gaze upon this interesting process, so distinctly visible in nearly all its steps. Soon a current of air bore a heavily-loaded cloud towards us, and we were under the necessity of applying the whip to the horses, and trying our speed in the race. The cloud, however, overtook us, and gave us a little sprinkling of its treasures, as it majestically sailed along in obedience to that will which gave it birth.

We soon arrived at the place of our destination. At the foot of one of the loftiest mountains of New England, was situated the comfortable farm-house of which we were the invited guests. Numerous barns and sheds surrounded the house, arranged to suit convenience, without the least reference to beauty or order. The farmer was a man of piety and intelligence, while every thing about the house and farm, showed that he knew not the pressure of want.

About twenty years before, he and his brother, young men of twenty-one, had entered the wilderness. A majestic growth of trees then overshadowed the whole region. The axe of the settler had not made a single opening for the rays of the sun to reach the

earth. About eight miles from the camp which they erected, a few settlers had commenced operations, and a foot-path had been opened by them through the trees, from the partially cultivated regions fifteen or twenty miles to the east. These enterprising young men had however advanced to the extreme borders of civilized life, and had then plunged into the unbroken forest, to seek a home in its untamed wilds.

None but the beholder can form a conception of the grandeur and the dignity, even of the silent forest. No underwood obstructed the progress or the view. The majestic trunks of the trees rose fifteen or twenty feet into the air, and then shot forth into thick branches, whose luxuriant foliage invested the scene with an awe-imposing gloom. Each with a pack upon his back, containing provisions for a week, and with an axe in his hand, they travelled through the woods for several hours, till they arrived at the spot where they were to lay the foundations of their future homes. Week after week they swung the axe, while the forest resounded with their blows, and with the crash of falling trees. A little camp made of the boughs of trees, afforded them a shelter by night, and during all the hours of the day, they were busy at their work. Saturday afternoon they would shoulder their axes, and emerge from the woods, to pass the sabbath with their neighbours. Monday morning, having sharpened their tools, and obtained a fresh supply of provisions, they again returned to their toil. Thus past the summer. By the middle of autumn

a vast opening had been made in the forest, and the ground was covered with the huge trunks and branches of the prostrate trees. The young men then returned to the distant home of their parents, in one of the well-cultivated farming towns on the frontier. The trees were left to dry in the sun for a spring burning.

When the returning sun of spring had melted the snow and dried the ground, again the young men were seen directing their steps to the scene of their summer's labour. The leaves still clung to the branches of the prostrate trees, but they were dry and withered, and it needed but a spark of fire to envelope the field in flames. The trunks and branches of the trees were then placed in piles and set on fire. But few spectacles are witnessed more truly magnificent than some of these fires in the woods. At times, the forest to an immense extent is wrapt in flames. The fire sweeps along through the dry leaves and rubbish, with a rapidity that is fearful. Now encircling a tree of peculiarly combustible nature, it mounts, rushing and crackling, to its topmost branches, a majestic pyramid of flame. Occasionally these fires are seen sweeping over a mountain, with a brilliancy that would almost eclipse the glory of Vesuvius.

A few years since a spectacle of this kind was witnessed, which no language can adequately describe. It was late in the autumn. A season of unusual drought had converted every combustible substance upon the surface of the ground almost to tinder. The fire from a farmer's clearing had pene-

trated the woods, and for weeks, had been moving onward, in its unresisted and desolating progress. The flames in their extensive range had passed over the *opening* of many a lonely settler, and in an hour had consumed the labour of years. The winds bore them to the foot of the mountain, whose sides were covered with the decayed trunks and branches of the growth of centuries. The mountain stood in lonely grandeur, elevating its head twelve hundred feet above the surface of the surrounding forest. The night was dark. The wind dry and suffocating, had increased almost to a gale. Whirling in circling eddies around the mountain, it scattered far and wide the blazing branches, till the whole mountain assumed the aspect of a raging, roaring furnace. Heaving up its immense columns of smoke and flame, it gleamed upon the eye and sent dismay to the heart of the few adventurers who in that distant and solitary wilderness had found their home. I heard the appearance described by an eye-witness, who stood at the door of his dwelling, gazing upon the sublimities of this midnight scene. The fires are often exceedingly destructive to property, and in not a few instances, life also has been lost. The whole country appears in flames, and there is no place of refuge. In one instance, in which all the members of the family, with the exception of an aged grandmother, were absent from home, endeavouring to arrest the progress of the approaching flames, the fire and smoke drove them off, and rushed in its impetuous fury over the farm. The barns, the house, and the fields even,

were enveloped in flames. There was but one place of escape—the well. The poor woman, who had remained in the house, succeeded by means of the bucket and the rope in letting herself down into this retreat. The burning rafters of the house fell upon the orifice of the well and shut her in. After the flames had abated, her friends returned, expecting to rake her bones from the embers of their smouldering dwelling. While pursuing their mournful search, they heard her voice, calling for help, and drew her out half dead with fright and exhaustion.

Late in the autumn, in the new settlements of New England, the smoke of those fires may be seen ascending from all parts of the horizon. Cinders are borne for miles by the winds. And sometimes a region of hundreds of miles in extent is enveloped in dense clouds of smoke. No precautions can prevent these occurrences, for the new settler in clearing his land, must burn the underwood, and the rising of the wind at once carries the fire beyond human controul. In the more thickly settled parts of the country, the cultivation of the fields removes the fuel which feeds the fires, and they are consequently rare. And yet I have known the inhabitants of a populous village called out by a general alarm to contend with the flames which, like an invading army, were marching triumphantly through the woods, and threatening to consume their dwellings. For days and nights together all the physical force of the village has been arrayed in 'fighting the fire.' There are however, other parts

of New England where such scenes are not only unwitnessed, but unheard of.

But I must return from this digression. The young adventurers, having burned up as much of the wood as they could, in the little opening which their axes had made in the almost impenetrable forest, brought upon their backs a few bushels of wheat, which they sowed among the stumps and wide-spreading roots of the trees which still remained in the ground. If they broke a hoe, they had to walk eight or ten miles through the woods to get it mended. If an axe glanced against a rock, the grindstone which was to restore its edge was ten miles off. Such were the obstacles they met, and the hardships they endured in literally hewing out for themselves a home in those distant wilds.

Having placed the seed in the ground, they commenced with their axes building a house. Boards were of course out of the question. Good mother earth spread out her bosom for the floor. Unhewn logs, enclosing an area of thirty feet square, and dove-tailed at the ends, formed the walls of the house; a hole sawed through a couple of the logs being the window, and another opening at one corner of the house affording a door. Long poles laid across the top, and these covered with the bark of trees, afforded a very comfortable protection from the weather. A settler who has advanced thus far, is well established in the world. He then begins to reap the reward of his toil. He feels that he has a good farm, and a comfortable home, and immediately goes in search of some one to be the envied

lady of the newly-erected mansion, the mistress of the youthful farm. That spirit of romance which animates the bosom of the untutored as well as the cultivated, converts these hardships into pleasures, these toils into enjoyment. Think not the hardy settler claims your pity. No! you must go to the agitating halls of state; to the aching hearts surrounded by the trappings of fashion, to find those to whom the world is a weariness, and for whom the home has no charms. The distribution of enjoyment in this world is far more impartial than is generally imagined. If there be peace with God, every situation will have its peculiar enjoyment. The young man, with bold heart and firm sinew, who grapples with the hardships of the wilderness, finds that there is an enjoyment in the very spirit of enterprise, which repays him for his toil.

Actuated by this spirit there are thousands who are pushing back deeper and deeper into the vast forests which frown over the interior of this mighty continent. Even at the base of the rocky mountains, already is to be found the cabin of the white settler. And those mountains will present but a momentary barrier. The multitude of emigrants will soon be witnessed, rushing down their western declivity and filling up the plain, till the waves of the Pacific will be burdened with the fleets of the cities which will adorn her shores.

The brief history we have given of an individual case, is the history of tens of thousands. Gradually the trunks of the trees decay, and are removed. The whole forest becomes prostrated by the axe

of the settlers. Fences enclose the farms. Saw and gristmills are erected upon almost every stream. The log house is deserted, and converted into a piggery or a barn. Substantial dwellings, neatly painted, and with glazed windows, not unfrequently adorned with venetian blinds, cheer the landscape, and gratify the eye, with the evidence they present of prosperity and comfort. And by the time the children of the first settler become of age, they imitate their father's example, and shoulder the axe as they seek for themselves a home in the unbroken solitudes of the forest.

It is thus that the wilderness of America is bowing before the hand of civilization. It is thus that villages, and even cities, are rising as by magic throughout this new world.

In the individual case to which we have above alluded, it is now about twenty-five years since the young men first made the forest resound with the crash of falling trees. Now there is opened to the eye of the traveller a town of well-cultivated and highly-productive farms. Immense flocks of sheep graze in the pastures. Large mowing fields are seen spreading out their smooth surfaces, undeformed by rocks or stumps. Several mills are erected upon the streams which flow down from the adjacent mountains. There are houses of handsome exterior, and genteel interior. The neatly painted church is every sabbath filled with an intelligent and attentive audience. A skilful physician has fixed himself there, and they have also a settled minister, whom education, and piety, and

talents render a most acceptable preacher. The town is divided into several school districts, in each of which there is a public school during the winter months. There is also during the summer months a private high school, in which the higher branches of useful education are taught. Here none need suffer, but the indolent. Public and private charity will protect the few who may be infirm. Those who are willing to labour, will be rewarded for their labour, by a competent support.

No one will expect to find in regions so distant, and in society so new, the artificial courtesies and ceremonies which regulate intercourse in fashionable circles. In the dwelling of the farmer you will generally find plain, frank, manly sense, with a good degree of intelligence respecting the general state of the world, and the political condition of his own country. You can hardly find a dwelling in New England, be it a framed house, or a log cabin, in which some periodical print is not taken. The newspapers of the day are scattered far beyond the route of the mails, and the region of passable roads. The lonely settler will weekly emerge from his distant home in the woods, to get his newspaper. The writer of this chapter once passed a night in a log-house, many miles beyond the region traversed by passable roads. It was in the depth of the silent, the almost unbroken wilderness. Far as the eye could reach from this humble dwelling, nothing could be seen but the wildness of unsubdued nature. Water-fowl of various kinds were sporting upon the wide sheet of water, that glistened like a mirror

embosomed in the forest. Lofty mountains encircled the horizon, their sides covered with a thick growth of trees, and their rocky battlements towering to the skies. One would think that in an abode so lonely, and apparently so entirely secluded from intercourse with man, there must be found the ignorance of an almost semi-barbarous state. But there we found the Bible, and the family altar, and heard the voice of morning and of evening prayer. There we found the regular files of the newspaper, and in conversation with the tenant of that lowly abode, we found him well acquainted with the various subjects which were then agitating the political and the religious world. The missionary operations of the day; the hostile manifestations of Europe; the public men and important measures of his own country, were subjects with which his mind was familiar, and upon which he had formed opinions.

I had with me one of the novels of Sir Walter Scott. As I threw myself upon the bed at night, the book was left upon the coarse pine-table before the fire. The light of the blazing pitch-pine-knot stuck into the crevice of the chimney, threw its bright flashes over the room, while the black smoke it emitted, rolled in circling wreaths up the chimney. Lamps and candles were luxuries unthought of in this humble dwelling. The farmer took up the book, and soon became so interested in its pages, that the feeling of drowsiness, and the thought of sleep was driven from him. I awoke about midnight, and there he was bending before the pitch pine-knot, enchained by the creations of Sir Walter's

genius. Again I awoke before morning, and there he still was, apparently insensible of the lapse of hours, poring over the fascinating volume. In fact, the morning dawned before he laid aside the book to seek refreshment for the toils of the day.

Perhaps some of our readers, had they entered into this humble log cabin in its solitary situation, and looked around upon the apparent discomfort of its unfurnished interior, would have called the occupants *poor*. But the reply elicited by such a remark would probably be, 'What in the world do you mean? Do you call a man poor who owns a hundred acres of land, with a good log-house, and has his farm fairly under way?'

The settler who has advanced so far in converting the wilderness into a habitable abode, *feels* rich, and is so regarded by the new emigrant, who looks round upon the majestic trees which he is to prostrate with his axe before he can sow a single seed, or aspire to a more comfortable dwelling than the camp erected from the boughs of trees, with the branches of the hemlock for his bed.

The farmers in the older settlements of the country, have generally good houses, and enjoy a degree of substantial comfort, hardly surpassed by any other class of the community. Their children in New England, are almost without exception, well educated. They generally in early life form matrimonial connections, and either settle down upon a farm near home, or emigrate to the uncultivated lands of the west. Hence originates a great difficulty in obtaining female servants, or as they here

are usually called, domestics. This scarcity is one of the most signal proofs of the wide-spread prosperity of this land. The farmer's daughter has no inducement to go out to service. Her father is in comfortable circumstances; she is surrounded by friends, and is useful and happy at home. Why then should she leave these comforts and enjoyments? Those who wish to engage in profitable employment, can generally do far better than to go into the kitchens of the wealthy. The factories hold out a far stronger inducement. The pecuniary compensation is much greater than most families can afford to give. The factory girl of America is a very different person from the factory girl of some other countries. She is respected by her employers, and respects herself. Her wages enable her not only to meet every necessary expence, but to accumulate a very handsome sum for the time of need. In one town in Massachusetts, Sowell, there are between five and six thousand young females employed in the factories. Large numbers of these are professing Christians, and adorn their profession by orderly lives. They are liberal contributors to those objects of Christian charity, which at the present day, appeal so forcibly to the heart of every friend of the Saviour. After remaining in these abodes of industry a few months or years, they are found scattered over the land, the wives and mothers of our most useful citizens. I have just enquired of a manufacturer in the neighbourhood what wages the girls in his employ receives. He informs me that some receive five or six dollars a

week, none less than two or three. They pay one dollar per week for board, and consequently many among them clear four or five dollars each week. The wages of domestics in private families vary from four shillings and sixpence, or a dollar in the country, to ten shillings in the city. It consequently is not strange that there is a difficulty in obtaining domestics.

In addition to all this, braiding straw affords profitable employment for thousands. The farmer's daughter sits down by her father's fire-side during the long winter evenings, and while chatting with friends and neighbours, is employing her fingers in business more lucrative, than she could find in the more severe and far less pleasant duties of service. I was a short time since riding in a stage coach with a merchant, who was employing a number of females in braiding straw. He informed me that some of the girls who were skilful would make five dollars a week, and none less than two or three.

The consequence of all this is, that there are few American females who go out to service. It is a source of continued complaint in this country. But who has a right to complain? They can do better. In the cities, emigrants from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, are servants in most of the families. The negroes are also very generally employed in this way. And there are also *some* American girls, who prefer the seclusion of domestic life, and the information in domestic duties which is there obtained, to the noise of the factory.

Much has been written by travellers upon this

subject, which to most Americans is entirely new. An English lady once inquired of the writer of this chapter if it were a fact that in the United States the domestics and the family invariably sat at the same table. She had the impression that the washer-woman in the kitchen would unpin her apron, and wipe her parboiled hands, and sally into the parlour to take her seat at the dinner table, by the side of her mistress, and help her to entertain her guests. I suppose there may be such society in America, and the writer who can describe such scenes only, shews into what society he has been admitted.

In fact, to describe the manners and customs of the Americans, is like describing the manners and customs of the Europeans. The Roman, the Turk, the Greek, the Frenchman, the Spaniard, the Englishman, are alike Europeans. But how very different are the customs of their different inhabitants of Europe. And yet the wilds of northern Russia are hardly more remote from the capital of France, than are some parts of the United States from others. Occasionally a tourist ascends the Missisippi, and penetrates the new States which are watered by that magnificent river, and its majestic tributaries. He finds the savage still paddling his canoe upon those distant waters. He witnesses the tumultuous rush of emigrants from almost every nation under heaven, to take possession of those new and fertile vales. The Highlands of Scotland, the manufactories of England, the mud cabins of Ireland, the marshes of Holland, have sent out their

housands to tame this wilderness. They come together with their diverse customs, with their national prejudices; many unreasonably disaffected with their former home; some refugees from the prison or the gallows; and others with hardly property sufficient to purchase an axe or a spade, and yet bringing with them the ignorance and the vices of older countries. Mingled with these will be found respectable settlers, with intelligence, and integrity, and property. In such a heterogeneous mass as this, there is no national character. But the spirit of enterprize is so vigorous, that empires are rising as if by magic upon the borders of these mighty streams. The tourist who describes the scenes witnessed in these distant wilds, is read in new England with as much avidity as in old England. The Indian warrior who skims his light canoe upon waters of the lakes, or snares his game in the forests of Arkansas, would attract a thronging crowd in the streets of Boston or New York, as well as in those of London or Paris. Notwithstanding the great facilities for intercourse in this country, a distance of two or three thousand miles is not a trifle. And it must be confessed that the log cabins of these new and distant settlers do not afford the most pleasing specimens of intelligence and refinement.

A gentleman who visited Illinois a few years since, informed me that he knew many white persons who lived like the Indians, by hunting, and who were dressed in the shaggy skins of wild beasts.

One night he stopped at the spacious log-house

of a German farmer. He had been several years in the country, and his highly fertile farm had already conferred upon its cultivator no inconsiderable wealth. Large barns adjoined the house, and every thing around presented the aspect of far more than ordinary comfort. But our young traveller's modesty was most sadly shocked by finding that the farmer and his wife, with some half a dozen strapping sons and buxom daughters were to occupy the same room for the night with himself. I believe there were two rooms in the house, one for the employments of the day, and the other for the repose of the night. All the beds in the household were arranged in a row. The good old German and his wife led the van, as they 'hied them to their quiet nest.' In the next bed two of their blooming daughters reposed; the next was the honoured couch of the stranger, removed so far from the one occupied by his fair associates, that a person could walk between them; and then in regular gradation, followed the sons and the younger children. Such scenes I have been informed are not very rare in these new settlements. But such things excite as much surprise in Massuchusetts as in any other part of the world. The fact is, that in the United States there may be found, and even on an extensive scale, almost every variety of society, and of customs. There is here the roving savage; the semi-barbarous white man, who is the rival of the Indian in the chase, and the smoke of whose wigwam ascends in the same wilderness; there is the heterogeneous mass of foreign emigrants, the laborious

and thrifty settler, the substantial and wealthy farmer, the enterprising merchant, and the refugee form the circles of gaiety, and thoughtlessness, and fashion.

The more reflecting part of the community contemplate with deep solicitude the state and character of that society, which is forming in the vast territories of the west. They know full well that the votes which shall be cast in the valley of the Missisippi, must soon control the destinies of the nation. The Atlantic states must soon be eclipsed by the rising glories of the west. There our rulers are to be elected, and by them our laws are to be framed. Upon this subject, however, I shall enlarge more fully hereafter.

It is doubtful whether there is in any part of the world, a class of men more comfortable and contented, than the farmers of New England. They are an intelligent, and virtuous, and most influential part of the community. Many of them are the pride of the country, and the ornaments of that religion, which has made New England what it is. Go to their dwellings, and you will hear the morning and the evening prayer. Go to the church, and you will see them with their families, attentive and devout worshippers. Present to them the claims of suffering humanity, and you will find that neither the plains of Asia, nor the isles of the Pacific, are too remote for the reach of their sympathies and their beneficence.

CHAPTER II.

ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION.

A STRANGER riding through New England, has his attention arrested by the multiplicity of churches, or meeting-houses as they here are called. Almost every village has its two or three: not unfrequently as a little cluster of houses appear in sight, you see the two spires which mark the houses of God, rising side by side, either one of which appears large enough to contain double the population of the whole village. This is perhaps more invariably the case in the eastern part of Massachusetts, than in any other section of the country.

'What denominations of Christians worship in those houses?' you inquire of some passers-by.

'The Unitarians, Sir,' it is answered, 'worship in the old house there, and this new one belongs to the Orthodox.'

'Are there any other sects here?'

'Yes, Sir, the Baptists meet in the house there, without any steeple, and the Methodists hold their meetings in the school-house; only once a month the Universalists take their turn.'

Such would be substantially the information you would receive in very many of the villages of New England. This, however, is by no means universally the case. Occasionally, you will enter a town in which nearly all the inhabitants are united under one pastor. And throughout the New England states generally, the Orthodox congregationalists compose the principal society. They embrace the mass of the community, as to numbers, and the strength of the community, as to wealth and intelligence. And most frequently, when the naked fact is stated, that there is a small town of but a few hundred inhabitants, which is yet divided into three or four religious societies, an erroneous impression is conveyed to the mind. For in most such cases, there is one substantial society, and the others hardly deserve the name. Perhaps there will be in one town a Congregational and a Baptist church. They are both respectable in numbers, and abundantly able to support the institutions of the gospel. There is also a Methodist society, because there are half-a-dozen Methodists in the place, and a Methodist preacher occasionally gives them a call, as he goes the round of his circuit. When it is notified that there will be a Methodist preaching in the school-house, a respectable number, from curiosity or better motives, flock to hear. There is also, perhaps, a Universalist society, because some two or three individuals have associated themselves as a society, and occasionally they have preaching. In some places in New England, there are large and highly respectable Methodist societies. There are

also some Universalist societies which are strong in numbers. In the eastern part of Massachusetts, in the principal towns, the Unitarians embrace most of the wealth, and literary and political influence. But their influence is hardly felt except in a few counties around Boston. In most of the principal towns there are highly respectable and influential Episcopal societies; but you find none in the country, unless here and there some single individual, by his own personal influence, retain one in struggling existence. The Orthodox congregationalists and the Baptists, compose the two principal sects of the New England states. Taking the whole of the United States, the Baptist denomination is the most numerous. But in New England, the Orthodox congregationalists embrace the great mass of the community.

The American Quarterly Register for February, 1834, is principally occupied with an ecclesiastical register of the various denominations of Christians in the United States. The following is the general summary.

1. *Orthodox Congregationalists.* Estimating the ministers and churches not connected with the State Associations, as well as those which are, and also the churches and ministers of the same denomination, out of New England, we may place the total as follows.

1100 Ministers, 1250 churches, 155,000 communicants.

Estimating the communicants at one ninth of the population, the whole population will be 1,395,000.

2. *Unitarians.* 170 Societies, 150 ministers, 170,000 population.

3. *Presbyterians.* 2070 Ministers, of which 229 are licentiates, 2500 churches, 233,280 communicants, 22 synods, 111 presbyteries; additions to the number of communicants in 1832-3, 30,798; net gain in communicants, 16,242; population, (9 for a communicant) 2,102,220.

4. *Dutch Reformed Church.* 167 Ministers, 197 churches, 21,115 communicants, about 30,000 families, and 150,000 souls.

5. *Protestant Episcopal Church.* 18 Dioceses, 17 bishops, 648 clergymen, between 700 and 800 parishes.

6. *Calvinistic Baptists.* 4,100 Ministers, 5,800 churches, 450,000 communicants.

We have added an amount to the sums reported in 1833, equal to the increase of the preceding year.

7. *Methodist Episcopal Church.* 6 Bishops, 22 conferences, 2,232 travelling preachers, 168 superannuated, 619,771 members, of which 78,475 are coloured persons; increase of members last year, 66,685.

8. *Evangelical Lutheran Church.* 216 Ministers, including 25 licentiates, 800 congregations, 89,487 communicants; annual average number added to the church, between 13 and 14,000.

9. *German Reformed Church.* In the following estimates, are included the Synod of the German Reformed church, the Reformed Synod of Ohio, and the Independent Free Reformed Synod in Pennsylvania.

180 Ministers, 600 churches, 30,000 communicants, 300,000 population.

10. *Associate Presbyterians.* 10 Presbyteries, 79 ministers, 169 congregations, 5129 families, 12,886 communicants.

11. *Free-Will Baptists.* 18 yearly meetings, 46 quarterly meetings, 661 churches, 410 elders, 155 licentiates, 30,440 communicants; 2099 increase last year.

12. *Six Principle Baptists.* 9 Ministers, 25 churches, 1672 communicants.

13. *Free Communion Baptists.* 2 Conferences in New York, and 3 or 4000 population.

14. *General Baptists in Kentucky.* 8 Churches, 214 members.

15. *Seventh Day Baptists.* 42 Ministers, 32 churches, 4258 communicants.

16. *Church of the United Brethren.* 33 Ministers, 24 congregations, 5745 members, including children.

17. *New Jerusalem Church.* 8 Ordaining ministers, 8 priests and teaching ministers, 15 licentiates, 25 societies, 122 places where there are known to be receivers of the doctrines.

18. *Cumberland Presbyterians.* 70 Ministers, 110 congregations, 15,000 communicants, 135,000 population.

19. *Associate and other Methodists.* 400 Ministers, 50,000 communicants, 200,000 population.

20. *Friends.* Probably 450 congregations, and 220,000 population.

21. *Universalists.* 3 or 400 Ministers, 5 or 600 congregations.

22. *Shakers.* 45 Ministers, 15 churches or congregations.

23. *Roman Catholics.* 550,000 Population.

24. *Jews.* 15,000 Population.

25. *Other Sects.* Several smaller sects, and persons of no denomination, would probably amount in population, to 800,000 or 1,000,000.

I shall now proceed to explain the ecclesiastical order of the congregational churches of New England. Let us suppose the case of a new town, with a spare population of a few hundred inhabitants. There are perhaps fifteen or twenty individuals, who are members of churches in other places, from which they have moved. Occasionally a minister sent by the Home Missionary Society visits them, and they are favoured with preaching. But generally they meet on the sabbath, in the school house, or in some private dwelling, and one offers a prayer, another reads a chapter in the Bible, another reads a sermon from some printed volume, and perhaps another ventures to offer a few remarks by way of encouragement to his brethren, and of exhortation to his neighbours. As the population of the town increases, they begin to think of forming themselves into a church, and settling a minister. Perhaps the plan is to unite with an adjoining town in the support of a minister who is to preach alternately in each town. Not unfrequently three or four feeble towns thus unite.

But the first thing to be done, is to organ-

ize a church. They look to some neighbouring minister for advice, as to the mode of procedure. He perhaps engages to draw up for them a creed and covenant, which is to be the basis of their union. A meeting of all the church members in town, who wish to unite in the organization of the church, is then called, and the creed and covenant presented. This is thoroughly discussed, and probably, not a few alterations made in the mode of expression, to suit the peculiarities of the various individuals. Several evenings are probably occupied in this important transaction. At length, the creed is assented to. One or two are then chosen a committee in behalf of the rest, to call a council of a few of the neighbouring ministers to organize the church. At the appointed time and place the council convene. The individual church members then present their creed and covenant to the council. The council, after having examined these, and being satisfied of the Scriptural basis upon which they wish to be united, vote to adjourn to some suitable place to attend to the solemnities of the occasion, and assign to each individual the part he is to perform. The solemnity is perfectly simple. A sermon is preached, an appropriate prayer offered, the creed and covenant read, while the members of the church assent to it by standing together in the aisle. If any are to be received into the church, who have never made a profession of religion, they having been previously examined as to their religious views and feelings, are then received, by assenting to the creed with the rest,

and by receiving the ordinance of baptism, if it has not been administered in their infancy.

The following is, perhaps, a fair specimen of the creeds and covenants of the New England churches. As every church is, however, independent of every other, there is almost an infinite variety in the mode of expression.

'CONFESSION OF FAITH.

1. We believe that there is one God, the Creator and rightful disposer of all things,—existing as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that to these three persons, as the one God, all Divine perfections are to equally ascribed.

2. We believe that the Bible was given by inspiration of God, as the only unerring rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe that mankind are fallen from their original rectitude, and are, while in a state of nature, wholly destitute of that holiness which is required by the Divine law.

4. We believe that Jesus Christ, the *eternal Word*, became man, and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, made an atonement for the sins of the world.

5. We believe that they, and they only, will be saved in consequence of the merits of Christ, who repent of sin, and believe in him.

6. We believe that although the invitations of the Gospel, are such, that all who will, may come and take of the water of life freely, yet the wickedness of the human heart is such, that none will come

unless drawn by the special influences of the Holy Spirit.

7. We believe that the sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Baptism to be administered only to believers and their households; and the Supper only to believers in regular church standing.

8. We believe that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world, when there will be a resurrection of the dead, and when the righteous will enter on eternal happiness, and the wicked will be sentenced to eternal misery.

THE COVENANT.

You do now, in the presence of God and men, choose the Lord Jehovah to be your God and Father; the Lord Jesus Christ to be your only Saviour; the Holy Spirit to be your Sanctifier. You dedicate yourself to God, unreservedly surrendering all that you have and are to his sovereign disposal—engaging, by his assistance, to live henceforth to him, and not to yourself, and to aim, whatever you do, to do all to his glory. You cordially join yourself to this church, and engage to be subject to its discipline, so far as it is conformable to the Gospel; and to walk with the members thereof, in love, watchfulness, and purity.

I then in the presence of God and these witnesses, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, pronounce you a member of this branch of his visible church, and engage to treat you as such: to watch over you in love; praying that we all may

become more and more conformed to the example of our Divine Master, till we come to the perfection of holiness in the kingdom of his glory.'

The next thing is to obtain a pastor. After hearing several individuals preach as candidates, they find one, who they hope is willing to stay with them, and with whom they are pleased. A meeting of the church is called, and they vote to give the candidate an invitation to remain with them. The members of the parish then have a meeting, and unite with the church in the invitation, and they mutually agree as to the salary which they will offer. In great farming towns, the salary is generally from 5 to 600 dollars, or about £100 English currency. There are not ten clergymen in New England whose salaries exceed 2000 dollars a year.

In the course of a week or two, the pastor elect returns his answer. If in the affirmative, a council of the neighbouring clergymen is again convened by invitation from the church. The candidate is then publicly examined by the council, as to his qualifications for the sacred office. The following extracts from the minutes of such a council, will most accurately describe the mode of procedure.

'At an ecclesiastical council, convened at ——, Jan. 28, 1830, for the purpose of ordaining Mr. ——, as pastor of the evangelical church and society in said place, were present by their pastors and delegates, the following churches.'

(Then follows a list of eight or ten churches, each sending one lay delegate with its pastor.)

'The council attended to the call of the church and society to Mr. ——, to become their pastor and minister, and to his acceptance of the same. Mr. —— was also examined relative to his church standing, his licence to preach the gospel, his religious experience, his motives in entering the ministry, his doctrinal views, his theological attainments, and his qualifications generally, for the great and important work to which he is called.

'Whereupon, voted unanimously, that the council has obtained satisfaction in relation to all these particulars, and are prepared to proceed to the service of ordination.

The several parts in the public services, were then assigned as follows:—

Rev. Mr. ——, to make the introductory prayer.
Rev. Mr. ——, to preach the sermon.
Rev. Mr. ——, to make the ordaining prayer.
Rev. Mr. ——, to give the right hand of fellowship.
Rev. Mr. ——, to give the charge to the pastor.
Rev. Mr. ——, to make the concluding prayer.

'Voted, that the council do now adjourn to the meeting-house to attend to the public services, and that subsequent to these services, the council be dissolved.

Signed —— —— Moderator,
—— —— Scribe.'

The solemnity of ordination is very simple. The pastor elect enters the pulpit, in which there are usually three other clergymen, to unite in the im-

position of hands. They then place their right hands on the pastor's head, while one leads in the prayer, which ceremonially consecrates him to his most solemn charge.

The duties of the Christian minister, though pleasing, are arduous. The people who have taken so deep an interest, and made such pecuniary sacrifices to obtain his services, are ready at once to give him their affections, and they desire to treat him as a family friend; consequently, they feel disappointed, if his visits to them are not frequent. The duty of parochial visiting becomes one of the most arduous and exhausting of the labours in which he is called to engage. The privileges of the ministry, in this country, are not sufficiently inviting to induce many to incur those responsibilities, who are not actuated by truly Christian motives. And the standard of duty is so high, that the man who will not consecrate all his energies to his work, cannot ordinarily obtain a support.

I doubt whether there is a body of harder-working men in the world, than the New England clergy. They preach two written sermons every Sabbath; and on Sabbath evening, they generally preach an extempore sermon in the meeting-house. During the week, they hold two or three evening lectures. They are expected to visit, not unfrequently, every family in the parish—and these visits are generally made strictly religious visits, and closed with prayer. In addition to this, in all the country places, the general superintendence of the school devolves upon them. They examine the instructors, and visit the

schools. Should a New England clergyman venture to preach a sermon which he had not written himself, he would entirely forfeit his reputation. It may well be supposed that with all these duties, and receiving but a small salary, few of the worldly and the ambitious would be enticed to enter the desk. There is no such thing here as working by proxy. Every pastor puts his hand to the work, and engages personally in the laborious performance of parochial duties. There is no distinction of rank, other than that conferred by talents and successful labours. The most eminent divines of the land engage in the same duties of Sabbath labour, and evening lectures, and parochial visiting. It is, in fact, their zeal and success in these efforts, which constitutes their eminence. And were they to neglect these, their reputation and their support would fail together. The colleges occasionally confer a degree of D. D. upon those clergymen who have acquired extensive influence, but even this trifling distinction is but little regarded, and many have refused to accept the proffered honour.

The salary of the pastor is raised by voluntary contribution. The individuals wishing to belong to the parish, place their names upon the clerk's book, and the sums they are willing to pay. Sometimes they vote to assess a tax upon property; sometimes a tax upon pews. Those, and those only pay who wish to do so, and they pay just what they choose.

The minister can by law, recover the salary voted at the regular parish meeting. But the parish can, at any time, refuse to vote the salary for another

year. This course is sometimes adopted, to get rid of an unacceptable pastor. Sometimes they meet and vote his dismission, sometimes the church are exceedingly attached to their pastor, while the parish are dissatisfied on account of his spirituality, and Christian ardour. Hence arises a contest between the church and the parish. These contests have of late years, been very frequent in Massachusetts. They have generally resulted in a separation—the parish retaining, by virtue of numbers, the meeting-house;—the church, with a few associated individuals, retaining and sustaining the pastor. Under these circumstances, the church erects a new meeting-house, and the parish obtains a new minister. This has been the nature and the result of the Unitarian contest in the vicinity of Boston. The old house is occupied by the Unitarian parish, with their new minister. The new house is occupied by the church with their orthodox minister. I think that no one will contradict the fact, however it may be accounted for; that in almost every such case, a few years has shewn the marked decrease, if not total decay of the Unitarian parish, and the signal prosperity and increase of the ejected church. There are, undoubtedly, exceptions, where in consequence of peculiar circumstances, or individual popularity, the reverse has been the case. But in not a few of the towns, in which the separation has taken place, the old house is deserted and shut up, while the new house is filled with attentive worshippers.

Ministers are generally settled ostensibly for

life, but the connexion, in fact, exists only so long as is mutually agreeable to the parties. Not unfrequently, a church important in influence, will invite an able pastor from a church, where his influence must be less extensive. Thus there are many removals. There are however many churches, who deem it robbery thus to call from another church a highly-valued pastor. This subject is at the present time exciting some feeling in the churches. A young man enters the ministry in a retired parish. By diligent application to study and active efforts in the parish, in a few years, he becomes eminent for pulpit eloquence, and pastoral skill. He is the friend and the confidant of all his people. They love his virtues, and are proud of his abilities.

The pastor of a church in the metropolis of the state dies. A young man has not the experience requisite for so important a situation. The eyes of the church are directed to this faithful pastor in some distant and peaceful valley. A committee are sent to invite him to remove. He feels it to be his duty to exert as wide an influence in the world as he can. And after a painful struggle in tearing away from the affections of his people, he is transplanted from the vale where he has obtained his strength, to the more conspicuous and arduous duties of a city pastor. Almost every pastor in the city has been previously settled over some country parish, or in retirement has been disciplined for his more extended field of influence. Common as are the removals, it is a continual source of excitement to

the public mind. And though there are very many and powerful reasons in favour of such occasional transfers, it may be doubted whether, on the whole, more is not lost than gained. It not unfrequently happens, that a minister, who in one sphere met with great acceptance, and was exerting a very salutary influence, by removal, finds himself situated with a people, with whose customs he is not familiar. A few months satisfies both himself and the people of his new charge, that it would have been far wiser for their pastor to have remained in the situation he previously occupied. But the people with whom he was first settled, have engaged the services of another pastor; or if they have not, they have withdrawn from him their confidence and affection, in consequence of his leaving them. His failure in the new enterprise has injured his reputation in the community. He is soon again dismissed, and never regains the standing which he once held. Such cases are not rare.

And yet there are other cases in which the talent which had been buried in some secluded valley, has been called out and excited by intercourse with the busy world, and has startled the slumbers of thousands. The eloquence which had instructed and charmed the few humble listeners of the village church, has drawn to the spacious temples of the metropolis, thronging crowds, and has vibrated in thrilling tones through the nation.

I have spoken of the independence of the Congregational churches of New England. And yet they are, in many respects, far from independent.

The moral influence of the churches upon each other is very strong. If a church invite a clergyman to settle over them who is unsound in doctrine, or doubtful in piety, a council of evangelical clergymen will refuse to ordain him. And if a church have not the sympathy and the fellowship of the neighbouring churches, in ordinary cases it must have but a feeble and struggling existence.

The clergymen of New England have generally formed themselves into voluntary associations. From ten to twenty individuals who are situated near to each other, will thus unite in a ministerial association. They generally meet once in three months for intellectual and spiritual improvement, and for mutual advice in forwarding the interests of Christ's kingdom. These fraternal interviews are generally very interesting and profitable. After a meeting of twenty-four hours, the pastors return to their respective churches with new zeal, to press forward in their delightful labours. The influence of these associations in promoting brotherly love, animating zeal, and exciting simultaneous effort, is very great. The association to which the writer of this chapter belongs, consists of twelve ministers. We all live within a few miles of each other, and meet once in three months, at ten o'clock in the morning, and adjourn at ten o'clock the next morning. The time is passed in listening to the performances which were assigned at the previous meeting. One preaches a sermon ; another presents an explanation of some difficult passage of Scripture ; another reads a dissertation : plans of sermons are presented, and

all the exercises are made the subject of free and friendly criticism; questions are also frequently presented for the advice of the association.

Besides these numerous minor associations, there is, in each of the New England States, a General Association, composed of two delegates from each of these smaller bodies. The General Association meets once a year, and hears from its members a report of the state of religion within their respective limits. Suggestions which are deemed of general importance, are here presented and recommended to the churches. This body, composed of clergymen from every section of the state, has deservedly great influence over the public mind. The measures which are proposed to the churches, sanctioned by their recommendation, are pretty generally adopted.

This is in general the ecclesiastical organization of the New England States. There are several other convocations of the clergy, to consult respecting the general interests of the cause of religion. It is, however, unnecessary to be more particular.

As the churches are all sustained upon the principle of voluntary contributions, it is to voluntary aid alone, that application can be made to plant and sustain the new churches which are so rapidly springing up throughout the length and breadth of our land. The following is an extract from a letter which the writer of this chapter received a short time since. It will give the reader a more vivid idea, than I can communicate in any other way, of the condition of these new churches, and

of the manner in which they are sustained. It describes scenes, not in New England, but in the 'far West.'

'The Lord has been pleased to make me the pastor of a little obscure flock in one corner of this great valley. We have had existence as a church, only about five years. Our number is about eighty. But we have only about eighteen families who can be depended upon, to support the gospel, or do anything of consequence in a pecuniary way for the cause of Christ. These eighteen families are obliged by the terms of their call, to pay me two hundred and forty dollars. Besides this, they have subscribed one hundred and twenty dollars towards finishing their house of worship; about sixteen dollars to support the Monthly Tract distribution, ten dollars for the Home Missionary Society, five dollars for the education of poor and pious youth. Now all these sums added, make four hundred and thirty-one dollars, which these eighteen families are bound to pay this year. If this sum were equally divided among the eighteen, it would make a dividend of twenty-three dollars, which each family would be obliged to pay. But it is far from being equally divided. Some families will pay fifty dollars, some forty, and so on down to five dollars. None of these families can properly be called wealthy. With the exception of three or four families, they all live in their log cabins, because they have not been able to build comfortable houses. They have, indeed, good farms considerably im-

proved, which will in a few years, with a common blessing, afford them a comfortable living. Most of them are yet somewhat in debt for their farms, which, in a few years they will have paid, if they have the usual success. Now, Sir, these people have done their utmost, and have already paid upwards of eight hundred dollars towards building their house of worship, and they feel able to do no more at present, on account of pecuniary embarrassment, from which they cannot expect to recover, even next year. Unless, therefore, we can obtain foreign aid, our house must remain unfinished, as it is. But two hundred dollars would enable us to finish it, so as to make it neat and comfortable. Now, Sir, we make our request. Will you undertake for us, and endeavour to collect from your congregation and the neighbouring churches, this sum or a part of it? By so doing, you will confer a high favour upon us, and lay us under lasting obligations of gratitude. We shall be thankful for any sum you will be able to afford us. Two hundred dollars to us now would be worth more than a thousand dollars to you in those old and wealthy congregations. If you should be so kind as to undertake for us, and should be successful in making a collection, you may pay it to the Home Missionary Society, and request them to send me an order on the treasurer of the society.

'We are settled in the midst of a fertile country. in which there is little or no waste land. The population upon it is already very dense, for this new country; and this population is rapidly in-

creasing. The probability is, that there will not be a single spot of ground eighteen years hence, which will not be occupied by some farmer. Infidelity, Universalism, and every species of error abound among us, and are increasing rapidly in this region. We scarcely make an effort to improve the moral and religious condition of this people, without meeting the most bitter opposition. Presbyterians here have to bear the whole brunt of the opposition, because they are the principal denomination which are active in supporting Sabbath Schools, Tract Societies, &c. There is a very convenient school house in the centre of our congregation, which we have, till lately, been permitted to use for our religious meetings. But the enemies of Presbyterians have met and voted, that we shall meet there no longer. This was done too, at the very time they knew that our meeting-house was in such a state, that we could not occupy it. Since that time we have been forced to occupy our unfinished meeting-house, or go into some log cabin, too small for our congregation, or elsewhere. Now, Sir, you will readily see that our want of a convenient and comfortable place of worship, is a real embarrassment to us, and a hindrance to our prosperity as a church. If you can by any means obtain for us the sum of two hundred dollars, you will enable us to make our house of worship convenient and comfortable; if not, our house must remain in its unfinished condition for some years to come. If any one should be disposed to ask why we do not call for aid from our neighbouring churches, we

answer, that with very few exceptions, they are all, like us, struggling for life.

'With unfeigned friendship and esteem,

'I subscribe myself, &c.'

Such appeals as this are continually presented to our churches, and they are not presented in vain. Our church members are continually disciplined in the Christian duty of contributing of their property, to advance the cause of Christ. And if that cause cannot be sustained in this way, we are satisfied that it can be sustained in none other. All that we ask of the government is, to *let us alone*. The only protection we desire, is the protection which every honest man and good citizen deserves.

An appeal to the feelings of the Christian is almost invariably successful. And these appeals have been so successful in our churches, that the Societies of Christian benevolence, numerous as they are in our country, are in a state of high and increasing prosperity. The habit of contributing money—of making pecuniary sacrifices to sustain the cause of Christ, exerts so beneficial an influence upon the hearts of Christians, that in almost all cases, permanent funds are considered a curse, rather than a blessing. There is hardly an intelligent Christian to be found in the New England States, who does not feel that almost the greatest possible calamity which could befal the church, would be the patronage of the government.

A few ignorant and unprincipled men, as they see the unwearied activity of Christians, and the

triumphant success which is crowning their cause, endeavour to excite odium against religion, by raising the cry of 'church and state.' And some are so easily duped, as really to believe that Christians desire to make converts by law; and to build up churches by penal statutes. But the fact is, that almost every intelligent Christian in the land says to the government, 'protect us in our rights, as men and citizens, but as Christians let us alone.' Whether the Christian community is correct in these views or not, it is not for me to decide. My object is, to state facts, without eulogy or censure.

It may also be stated that the result of every year's experience, confirms Christians in these views. They are more and more convinced that there is no mode of operation so energetic and effectual, as that of voluntary association. It is this which has rolled back the tide of intemperance, which was heaving its surges over our land. It is this which is planting churches in every little village in our western wilderness, and supplying those churches with pastors. It is this which is placing a bible in every dwelling, and establishing Sabbath schools within the reach of all the children of the land. It is this which has converted Hawaii, dark and dismal as she once was, to a Christian place, and has gathered her roaming children to the school and the church. It is this which is now instructing the rangers of our own western wilds, and which is spreading out an increasing influence to all quarters of the globe.

No! Christians ask not for the aid of government. They ask only for the hearts and the energies of Christ's devoted friends. With these, they believe that the triumphs of Christianity will be carried to every shore, and through every land. Every man is at perfect liberty to pay for the institutions of the Gospel or not, as he pleases. If he is an infidel, and does not wish to pay for the support of religion in any shape, no one troubles him. Each individual pays to what denomination he pleases, and what sum he pleases, and no more. Office and honour are alike open to all. Each one without reference to religious belief, enjoys all the privileges our country affords.

Truth is thus left to the defence of those who love her cause, and we would not have it otherwise. As there can be no compulsory conversion, so neither would we have the cause of Christ sustained by compulsory support. And we do believe that no greater calamity could befal the American churches, than for the government, during the ensuing year, to erect a church in every village, and take those churches under its fostering care. We feel an assurance that the result would be to make religion suspected and odious to the people, and to fill the pulpit with worldly men, grasping only at the honours and emoluments of the office. A few years would shew that the energies of the church were paralyzed, and the land would be enveloped in spiritual death. Whatever may be said of the destitution of religious instruction, in the new settlements of our western territory,

Christians do not believe that government influence will remove that destitution. The only way in which it can be done, is by that energy which animated the primitive Christians, and which now animates many an American church ; it is by sending men, who, with the spirit and self-denial of Paul, will be willing to spend their lives in the incessant labours which these new countries require. This work is not to be accomplished by

> ' The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
> And then skip down again ; pronounce a text ;
> Cry—Hem ! and reading what they never wrote,
> Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
> And with a well-bred whisper, close the scene.'

The new settlements of America demand the labours of men who can endure hardship, and of bold hearts. A man must be animated by fervent piety, who will forego the comforts of a more refined home, and work his way among the log-houses of this scattered, and rude, and uncultivated people.

Our societies of benevolence are accomplishing this as fast as, under existing circumstances, it can be accomplished. The Education Society is searching out, through all the dwellings of the land, young men of piety and of talents, to lead them through a course of preparatory study, to the responsibilities of the ministry. And they do not lead them through a path of roses, but the way is so hedged by difficulties, that but few will be induced to enter it, but those who are willing to endure hardship and trials, that they may serve their blessed Redeemer, by proclaiming his love to a dying world. And this

Society is now training up, under the most salutary discipline, a thousand young men, and every year they are sending their little army of fresh recruits into the field, and every year the number is increasing.

The Home Missionary Society is taking from six to eight hundred feeble churches by the hand, and sending to them a pastor, and aiding in his support. Every year many of these churches arrive at such a degree of maturity, that they are able to sustain themselves, and are paying back into the treasury of the Lord, the assistance they have received. Consequently, every year, new churches are received under the fostering care of this Society, and with its rapidly-increasing resources, its influence is rapidly extending.

The Sabbath School Union is busily employing its energies, and is establishing in the remotest section of the land these nurseries of piety, and is blessing countless families with libraries of Christian knowledge.

The Bible Society resolves that no family in the land who will receive the Bible, shall be destitute of the word of life, and it finds in the principle of voluntary association, sufficient energy to carry its resolution into effect.

The Tract Society is not idle, and its silent messengers of instruction are seen in the stage, in the steam-boat, and in the hotel.

Far as the churches are from the standard of duty required in the Bible, great as is the distance they walk behind the Saviour, they are perfectly con-

vinced that no good would be accomplished by calling in the aid of the civil government. They do most undoubtingly believe that God will accomplish the redemption of the world by rousing the church to more vigorous efforts, and not by calling in the assistance of those who do not love his cause.

Those who in this land are raising the outcry of 'Church and State,' may be satisfied that there is no measure against which Christians would more strenuously contend. We rejoice that we here can meet upon an unobstructed arena, and commend truth to the protection of her own lawful weapons. With those weapons she is now triumphing; she is carrying her conquests through the land, and those who hate her reign, tremble, as they see that her reign is approaching.

[It would be improper to place before the English reader the statements and reasonings of the preceding chapter without a few remarks. Some allowance must be made, and some deduction admitted, in the case of both.

There has been a great tendency discernible among all American writers of late years, to overstate in a most extraordinary degree the prevalence of religion among their population. Perhaps no more striking instance of this tendency has been given than will be found at pages 23 to 26. We have there what is called 'An Ecclesiastical Register of the various denominations of Christians in the United States.' It is not the work of our author, but is taken by him from 'the American

Quarterly Register.' Such a document, we might have hoped, would have had something of a sober and trust-worthy character. Yet its extreme exaggeration is seen in a moment, if the various items are only added together, on the basis laid down at the commencement of the statement, of reckoning a gross population of nine for each actual member of a church. Thus calculated, it will be found that the entire number of persons belonging to some one or other of the various religious bodies in the United States, is made to be 17,896,905;—although we know from the official returns, that the *whole* population of the States was ascertained by the census of 1830, to amount to only 12,866,020!!

Now admitting that the increase of the succeeding three years may have augmented the latter number, and conceding that the discrepancy may therefore be now less monstrous than on the above comparison it instantly appears, still it is most deceptive and erroneous to venture upon any calculation which assigns either the whole or even a very large proportion of the inhabitants of any country now existing, to the pale of some of the various denominations of Christians.

No one possessing a competent acquaintance with the population of England, especially of her large towns, would venture to deny the fact, that of a large proportion of the people,—whether a fourth or a third may be doubtful,—it must, however reluctantly, be admitted, that they belong in no way whatever to any class of religious professors.

And no account that we have yet seen, will permit us to look upon the population of America in a more favourable point of view. Even the very letter quoted in the present chapter, (p. 40.) speaks of a 'dense population,' in the midst of which 'infidelity and every species of error abound and rapidly increase,' and in which 'only eighteen families can be depended upon to support the gospel.' Would it be possible, then, without manifest self-deception, to set down the whole population of such a district, as all included under some denomination or other of Christian professors. Surely not. Would not a deduction of one-third of their total number be considered a moderate one, for those who made no religious profession at all? Yet this scale would yield, for the whole of the United States, about *eight millions and a half* of professors, while the 'Ecclesiastical Register' here furnished to us claims nearly *eighteen millions!*

So much for the statistics of this chapter. The remaining representations, and the reasoning founded on them, may be admitted with only this one reservation,—that however true and just they may be, as respects America and American society, they have very little practical bearing on the case of our own country and its institutions.

Attempts are not unfrequently made, in violation of all the laws of reasoning, to infer from the mere existence of a certain state of things in America, the expediency of aiming to bring about a similar state in the European kingdoms. It would scarcely be more absurd to attempt to prove the folly of wearing

clothes, by the fact that there are many nations to be found in various parts of the world who wear none, and whose average health and strength and other powers, are fully equal to those of Europeans.

The facts may be taken to be just as they are here represented, with the single exception already pointed out, and we know not why the most attached supporters of our ecclesiastical institutions should hesitate or feel unwilling to admit them,—but the inference sometimes drawn, not indeed by our author, but by writers on this side the Atlantic, is altogether illegitimate and inadmissible.

The institutions of every country, to be beneficial and useful, ought to be adapted to the spirit and genius of the people. The attempt to force episcopacy on the presbyterian population of Scotland speedily proved abortive, and just as fruitless would any effort be, by whatever party made, which should now aim to take episcopacy away from the people of England.

Europe is occupied, almost entirely, by ancient monarchies; by kingdoms in which, for many centuries, every thing has been done, *for* the people, *by* the King and the nobles; and in which the people have only in modern times, and by degrees, attained to a share in the management of the public concerns. It is therefore, naturally a settled habit with them, to look to the government to provide many things for them. These things, among the chiefest of which may be reckoned the ordinances of religion,—have always been so provided, and such provision is the foundation of some of the most ancient institutions of our own country.

America, on the other hand, is a country of emigrants;—of men who betook themselves to the distant and uncultivated wilds of that vast continent, —some in quest of wealth, perhaps, but a large proportion in quest of more independence than they could enjoy here. One of the necessary conditions of their new state of being, naturally was,—that they should 'make their own laws and govern their own selves.' They had the whole building of a commonwealth to erect, from the foundation to the battlements, and even now is the work far from being completed.

In fact, though the very title page of this work speaks of American 'Institutions,' it ought to be borne in mind that the meaning of the word in this application, is much the same as when used for the 'Russell *Institution*' in Bloomsbury, or the 'London *Institution*' in Moorfields. It describes nothing more than a voluntary association of citizens, which may be altogether changed, or entirely dissolved, by the whim of the moment, and in eight-and-forty hours.

Conceding, however, as we do most willingly, that this series of experiments, as far as it has gone, has been more than moderately successful; still, how vast is the leap which remains to be taken, before we can get from this admission to the inference, that it would be wise to sweep away all the towers and fortresses of our ancient strength, in order to make a clear field on which to try just such another experiment here. The *cui bono* never presented itself with more overpowering force. What,

indeed, have we to gain? As well might we be asked, because the London University is not yet a total failure, to level in the dust all the pride of Oxford and Cambridge, in order to raise in their room a 'voluntary' university, free from the 'canker of endowments,' and unincumbered by the 'fetters of religious opinions.'

No! in so far as our transatlantic brethren appear to proceed with present success, and the promise of even greater prosperity, we would rejoice, and heartily bid them God speed. But imitation is never in our thoughts. Each in our own course, let the rivalry be a Christian rivalry, free from jealousy or ill-will;—but still, content with the system and state of things under which God has already blessed us, let us leave our brethren to the undisturbed, unenvied possession of their's, neither aiming or desiring to force our plans or methods upon them, nor yet attempting to adopt from their experience what, under our wholly different circumstances, would be both incongruous and impracticable.—EDIT.]

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH.

THE mode of admitting members to the church, though slightly varying, is substantially the same in all the New England churches. The candidate for admission is examined with much particularity respecting the evidences of his piety. Sometimes the examination is before the whole church; at others a committee, consisting perhaps of the pastor and deacons, is appointed for that purpose. The individual to be examined, presents either verbally or in writing, an account of his religious experience, and replies to those questions which any one of the church may propose. The following is, perhaps, a fair specimen of such communications generally.

'I was early the subject of serious impressions. When not more than five or six years of age, I felt secret prayer to be a duty, and for a time used frequently to go to a retired place, and sometimes take a younger sister with me, and kneel and pray to God. I was not blessed with religious instruction, and these impressions were "as the morning cloud and early dew." I soon contented myself

with repeating a short form of prayer, when all things went well with me, but in all my childish troubles, I used to go to God. As I grew older, I wandered further from him, and my affections were supremely fixed on the follies and vanities of childhood and youth. I rarely had any opportunities of hearing the truth preached, until my feelings had become strongly enlisted on the side of error.

'In the summer of 1822, I left home for the purpose of attending school. The principal of the school one day requested those who felt religion to be an important subject, and who were willing to converse upon it, to meet him in his study. My attention was arrested. I felt that *I* was destitute of it, and that it was an important subject for *me*. I attended, and became considerably interested. My convictions of sin were not deep, and I *now* feel that I *then* saw little indeed of the desperate wickedness of my own heart. When I left school, my impressions were effaced in a measure, and yet not so entirely as to permit me to engage with much interest in the vain amusements of youth.

'In the autumn of 1825, an intimate friend became hopefully pious. Much faithful conversation was addressed to me. Former impressions were renewed and deepened, I had clearer views of the deep depravity of my heart, and my perishing need of an interest in Christ. I remained in this state, but refusing to submit to God for two or three months, when I trust I was enabled to embrace Christ as my Saviour. It was only a faint trembling hope that I indulged, and though sea-

sons of darkness have been frequent since that period, yet I have never relinquished it.

'Several reasons have prevented me from offering myself for admission into the visible Church of Christ before the present time, but the principal one has been, the low state of evidences in my own heart of having experienced a saving change. I now feel it to be my duty publicly to profess my faith in Christ, and having been enabled, as I humbly trust, through infinite, unmerited grace, to choose him for my Lord and Master, I earnestly desire to obey his dying command, and to join myself to his peculiar people, and therefore present myself as a candidate for admission into this church.'

It may well be supposed, that with such an Ecclesiastical organization as ours, the people will look with a vigilant eye upon the operations of the minister. And while this vigilance cannot fail to be in some degree a stimulus to exertion, it also leads, at times, to very unreasonable animadversion, and favours him with the advice of those who are ignorant of almost every thing but their own importance. The following dialogue will perhaps distinctly show the nature of those petty annoyances of advice which are not uncommon in our parishes. We give an extreme case, as our object is forcibly to illustrate, if possible, the nature and the tendencies of our institutions. The time *may perhaps* yet come, in which human institutions will be divested of human imperfections, but it is very certain that that time has not yet arrived.

Mr. Jones was the pastor of a church in a small country village. In its seclusion but little bustle of business was known, and each individual was consequently much interested in the concerns of every other individual of the parish. The pastor and his family were the prominent object of scrutiny, and all felt at liberty to make, not only his public exercises, but even his domestic arrangements, the subject of free remark. This was done, not from any unfriendly feeling, for he was much beloved by his people, but in the absence of other engrossing topics of common interest, the movements of the pastor and his family became of primary importance.

One pleasant morning in the month of April, Mr. Jones took his cane and set off to visit, as was his custom, the families of his charge. He first entered the house of a humble family, the mother of which was a member of his church, but the father was an irreligious man, and but seldom seen at public worship on the Sabbath. He had conversed but a few minutes with the pious mother, before her husband entered, and with the well-meaning but blunt and careless air of a reckless man, addressed him.

'Good morning, good morning, Sir,—happy to see you. I had the pleasure of hearing you preach yesterday afternoon, Sir.'

'Yes! I observed that you were at church, and was pleased to see it.'

'Well, Mr. Jones, I am a plain man, and you must excuse me if I am pretty honest in my way of talking. But if you always preached as you

did yesterday, I should go to meeting oftener. You preached without notes yesterday, and that is what I call *preaching*. When a man goes into the pulpit and *reads* off a sermon—why I may just as well stay at home and read a sermon out of a book. If you would always preach without notes, I should almost always go to meeting.'

'I think myself,' said Mr. Jones, 'that extempore preaching is on many accounts preferable to written sermons, but still extempore preaching will not suit all. I should be perfectly willing to preach without notes all the time, if I thought it would be equally profitable to all my people.'

'Well,' said the man, laughing, 'if you will let me know when you are going to preach without notes, I will always come and hear you. But it is against my religion to go and hear men *read* instead of *preach*.'

After a little further conversation, Mr. Jones bade them good morning, and continued his walk. Though the man had addressed him in rude style, he knew there was no intentional disrespect, and was too much accustomed to such rencounters to allow his feelings to be much disturbed. Yet he could not help mourning over the strength and unreasonableness of men's prejudices.

The next door he knocked at, was that of a lawyer, who was telling every one by his conduct, that he had a most profound respect for himself. In self-respect, he went to church on the Sabbath. In self-respect, he attentively listened to the preaching. In self-respect, he bowed with dig-

nified courtesy to his more humble neighbours. He did many things, which were honourable and of good report, not because he feared God, but because he respected himself.

A little girl opened the door, and ushering Mr. Jones into the parlour, then went to the wing of the house, which contained the office of the lawyer, to inform him that the clergyman had called.

'Good morning, Mr. Jones,' said the respectful gentleman in slow and courteous accents. 'I am happy to see you this morning, and to have an opportunity of telling you how much we were gratified with your *forenoon* sermon yesterday,' (placing special accent on the word forenoon.) 'I trust you will not think, Mr. Jones, that I intend to flatter you, when I say that your *forenoon* was an admirably written discourse. That is the kind of preaching, Mr. Jones, which elevates the people, it improves their minds, it elevates their taste. A discourse *well-digested* and *carefully written* is substantial food to the mind. You will pardon me, Mr. Jones, for making the remark, but I think that clergymen generally, if they have not time to write out two sermons a week, had better exchange a little more frequently, so that they may never be under the necessity of preaching extempore.'

Mr. Jones was a man of acute sensibilities. He felt such remarks—but under the tuition of his Saviour, he had learned self-control. Natural feeling recoiled from the insult of such supercilious remarks. He was, however, sufficiently acquainted

with human nature to know the folly of arguing with such a mind, and therefore, quietly endeavoured to wave the subject, to drop a few remarks in behalf of his Saviour, and bidding the family good morning, (for the lady of the house had entered during the conversation,) he escaped farther torture.'

'How do you do? Mr. Jones,' exclaimed a man who was ploughing in the field by the road-side. Mr. Jones raised his eyes from the ground, for he had been walking along almost lost in thought, and kindly responded to his salutation. The farmer was a member of the church, active and useful, but want of humility was his infirmity. Mr. Jones inquired of him respecting the state of religion, if there was any thing of particular interest in his family, or among his neighbours.

'Why, yes, Sir,' said the farmer, 'yes, Sir.' I think things look more encouraging. My neighbours are more ready to talk upon the subject of religion than they have been for some time. It seems to me that all we want now is forcible appeals to the heart. I know there are some persons who like doctrinal sermons, and I suppose they are important in their place, but the fault of our folk is, that they know their duty but they won't do it. It isn't *enlightening* that they want; it isn't *instruction*, but melting appeals to the heart to make them *feel*. That is my view of the matter, Mr. Jones.'

'There certainly is some good sense in what you say, but a man cannot *feel* unless he believes. We

must convince a man of his danger, before he can *feel* it. We must convince him of God's goodness before he can *feel* gratitude. All correct feeling must be founded on correct belief.'

'True, true, Sir,' said the farmer; 'but if I may be so bold, it appears to me you preach doctrinal sermons a little too much, Mr. Jones. I have been reading some of Mr. Whitfield's sermons lately, and I am taken with them mightily; all heart, Sir, all heart. And only see how successful he was. It is really astonishing!'

Mr. Jones continued the conversation a little while longer to lead the man to more correct views of himself, and then went on his way. As he was passing the door of his aged deacon, he thought he would step in a moment and chat with him. The deacon was eighty years of age, a man of old fashions and deeply versed in theological lore. The good old man gave his doctor a cordial greeting, for he loved him, but he thought the times were sadly degenerate. He took down from his shelf a musty old volume of sermons, preached some half century ago, and placing it in the hands of Mr. Jones, said,

'There is a very interesting volume which I have been reading lately; it is a real treat to me to get hold of good old-fashioned doctrinal sermons. The fact is, Mr. Jones, you modern preachers are altogether out of the way. The *doctrines* are the very marrow of the gospel, and it is *doctrinal* preaching that we want to enlighten the public mind. Now I have lived eighty years, Mr.

Jones, and have seen the effects of all kinds of preaching, and you may depend upon it that the great thing is to have men well *indoctrinated.* The public mind wants enlightening; it needs instruction. Now I like your preaching as well as that of any body I hear, but I do think it would be a great improvement if you would preach doctrinal sermons rather more. Shan't I lend you this volume, Sir, perhaps you would like to look it over.'

Mr. Jones smiled at the *delicate hint* which his good deacon supposed he was giving, and taking the book, endeavoured to lead the conversation to subjects of practical godliness, and after uniting with the venerable deacon in prayer, continued his parochial calls.

In the middle of this little village there was a milliner's shop, where Mr. Jones occasionally called to converse with the females, whom he could see no where else. The front shop was arranged with articles for sale, and a little behind it, connected by a door, was the sewing-room of the females, who made the millinery of the village. As Mr. Jones entered the door of the outer shop, he heard the voice of a female in the sewing-room exclaim,

'Well, don't you think it is very improper for a minister's wife to dress as Mrs. Jones does? Last sabbath she had two large bows upon her bonnet; I do think it is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel for Christian people, and especially for minister's wives, to be given to so much dress. It will do very well for worldly people, but it is a scandal for Christians to act so.'

'Why Mary,' said another, 'I was working last week at Mrs. Bentley's, and she said that she thought it was too bad for Mrs. Jones to dress so meanly. She was finding fault with that very bonnet, and said that Mrs. Jones acted as though she thought there was a sin in every pretty colour. And you know that Mrs. Bentley is not at all gay in her dress. She says Mrs. Jones is a lady, and it is proper she should dress as one, and she feels provoked to see her assuming such a demure appearance.'

'Well,' replied Mary, 'I cannot help what Mrs. Bentley thinks, but I think that a minister's wife ought to avoid every ornament whatever, and if I have a good opportunity, I shall make bold to tell Mrs. Jones my mind upon the subject.'

Mr. Jones was a very unwilling listener to this conversation, and endeavoured, by walking about the shop, to make a noise, so as to attract their attention. But the inmates of the back shop were too much engaged in their discussion to hear him. He therefore quietly left the shop and went on his way. He felt pained at heart to think that there was no possibility of pursuing a course, which some would not make the occasion of confirming themselves in sin. He knew that his wife was ready to do anything which she thought would promote the spiritual welfare of the people, and he walked along, sad and disheartened, to see how many obstacles were hedging up his way.

He walked home to his study, and felt discouraged rather than animated by his morning walk.

He took up his pen to write, but it moved tardily and heavily along the paper, as he thought, 'There are not a few of my people who will not be profited by written sermons.' He laid aside his pen, and endeavoured to arrange his thoughts for extemporaneous address. But the ardor and the energy of his mind were paralised, as he remembered that they were not a few who would look with cold disdain upon such efforts, and who would exert an influence upon the minds of others, to prevent the possibility of good.

He kneeled in prayer. O God, it is my desire, while I live, to glorify thee. Wilt thou give me wisdom to pursue that course which is best adapted to do good in this place. My mind is disturbed and disquieted, wilt thou in mercy soothe it? I am undecided and perplexed; oh! make the path of duty plain. I hope, O God, that I am willing to bear censure, to take up the cross, but O lead me, that I may know what duty is, and that I may not spend my life in vain.'

He was here interrupted by a tap at the door. He rose from his knees, and opening the door, admitted a parishioner who had been for some weeks absent from town.

'How do you do, Mr. Jones?' said the new visitor, with a half smiling, half serious countenance. 'I have come to tell you the good news from Haarlem. I have been there for some time, and they have quite a revival of religion there.'

'I thank you for calling,' said Mr. Jones, 'I understood there was more than usual interest in

that place, and have felt anxious to hear from there.'

'Oh,' said the visitor, 'they have a most precious minister there; he is the most faithful and active man I ever saw. He is all the time among his people, from morning to night, visiting from house to house. It appears to me that such activity and zeal as he possesses, must be successful any where. People cannot be unconcerned when the importance of religion is urged so incessantly upon them at their homes.'

Now the fact happened to be, that there was no particular interest in Mr. Jones' parish at that time, and he was not in the habit of spending his *whole time* in parochial visiting. He however paid no attention to these *gentle hints*, for he did not consider it necessary to enter upon a defence of his views of duty. His good parishioner supposed, therefore, that he had been rather too obscure in his hints, and was growing more and more personal in his allusions, when he was interrupted by the entrance of another visitor.

Mr. Henry, who last entered, was a gentleman of sincere piety, and of refined mind. He was afraid of close reasoning, and his sensitive feelings shrunk from every departure from good taste.

After the usual salutations, said he, 'Well, Mr. Jones, I had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Simpkins preach last Sabbath. He certainly is a most eloquent man. I never heard so thrilling a sermon in my life, as he delivered. They say he is the most indefatigable student in the region.

You always find him in his study. I understand he generally studies twelve hours a day. And now he has risen to be one of the most eminent men in the country. How wretchedly those ministers mistake the matter, who fritter away their time, in running about from house so house. There is the minister of Haarlem, for instance; they say he is a very friendly man, indeed, and talks very pleasantly in the family, but it is no matter what text he takes, he always preaches the same sermon. Some of his people tell me they are going to dismiss him, next year, for they must have a more eloquent preacher. After all, the men who live in the study, and give all their energies to preparation for the pulpit, are the men who do the most good.'

Now the fact happened to be with Mr. Jones, that though he loved his study, he did not feel it to be proper to spend his *whole time* with his books. He considered it important to give a considerable portion of his time to parochial visiting.

It may well be supposed, that the sentiments expressed by Mr. Henry, did not accord with those of the first visitor. They were immediately engaged in an ardent dispute. Mr. Jones smiled as he listened for a few moments to their contest, and then pleasantly suggested to them the propriety of embracing some other time and place for their discussion.

As they withdrew, Mr. Jones found his own mind lightened of its transient load, and with a cheerful heart, he resolved, as he had done a thousand times before, that he would do that which he

thought right, and leave others to think and say what they pleased.

A man of independent spirit, and of commanding influence, who is devoted to his master's work, will soon triumph over such difficulties as these, and effectually shield himself from such unpleasant intrusions. But still in almost every parish, the evil is to a greater or less degree apparent, and it perhaps necessarily results from the fact, that the minister is so immediately dependent upon the people for his support. I have known some clergymen naturally rather undecided and inactive who were continually goaded by these gentle hints and friendly counsels; and it was well that they were thus goaded. There are others who are so decidedly *leading on* their churches to zeal and effort that they hardly know what such interference is, and would be astonished to learn that it could be to any a serious annoyance.

There are some churches possessed of funds sufficient to support the minister, and consequently no tax is imposed upon the society. These funds generally originate in the bequest of some individual, who hopes, by the establishment of a permanent fund, to give permanency to the preaching of the Gospel. But in not a few instances, these funds are already perverted to the support of a system of religion, directly at variance with that which it was the intention of the donor to sustain. In other cases, the fund has been a constant and most fruitful source of bickering and contention between the church and society. And in other cases, the people,

in consequence of the sufficiency of the fund, not being called upon to make any sacrifices to sustain the institutions of the Gospel, have lost their interest in those institutions. As they cost them nothing, they regard them as of little worth. In many cases, a fund has thus proved a cancer, consuming the whole energies of the church. Such societies, being unaccustomed to contribute for the support of the Gospel, cherish the feeling of inability to give, and instead of manifesting greater liberality than others, in the benevolent operations of the day, they are the most inoperative and inefficient societies in the land.

The cases are so rare, in which church funds are found to be a blessing, and the cases are so numerous, in which they operate most calamitously to the interests of religion, that the general impression is now, that they are far from desirable. This sentiment has been gaining strength for many years, and now the prevailing and almost universal feeling is, that churches and societies of benevolence, even, do far better to rely upon the piety of each successive generation for support. If this reliance fail, permanent funds are good for nothing. If this reliance do not fail, it is far better for the church, that the resources of the past generation should have been expended in meeting the wants of that generation, and that its energies should not have been retarded by entailment.

The sentiment here is strong, and is daily growing stronger, that the more entirely religion is thrown for its support, upon the friends of the

Redeemer, the better. We do not desire a church establishment, for whether rightly or wrongly, we *do think* it would be our curse, and we do not desire to see our clergy possessed of any peculiar privileges, and to glitter in the pomp of power, or in the rich endowments of wealth; for we believe that political power, and a princely income, would throw them into circumstances of temptation, almost too powerful for human nature to resist. And though *if* the Christian minister would use this power and this wealth, with singleness of heart, to promote the Saviour's cause, much good might be done, we fear to intrust him with them, for we think it much more probable that he would be induced to indulge in a worldly spirit, or to lay aside the self-denying toil of a servant of Jesus Christ. We wish to see his ambassadors men of faith and prayer, of self-denial, and of many labours; we wish to see them men who love their studies, and who love their flocks; men who are willing to work hard, and endure much that they may save souls. We wish to see men of vigorous minds, and of varied learning, who will lay all their treasures at the feet of Jesus, and in the pulpit, and the dwellings of obscurity, preach Christ, and him crucified. Such men do not often come from the dwellings of magnificence, or adorned with the trappings of political power. They are men, who having food and raiment, are therewith content; who as good soldiers of Jesus Christ are ready to endure hardships.

The number of such clergymen is continually

increasing. Truth being left to the sole defence of argument, the clergy are incited to more diligent study, and to most unwearied zeal. They cannot throw out random assertions without being called upon for proof. They are compelled by a constant influence from without, to look into the intricacies of the subject they discuss. The people are in the habit of demanding reasons, not assertions, and the acceptable preacher must be prepared with his strong reasons, and be ready to meet objections.

There is no class of students in our country, who, taken as a class, study half so much as our Theological students. While in the Theological Seminary, they are continually warned by fathers, who are engaged in active service, that when they come out into the world, intellect will be taxed to the utmost, and that unless they become thoroughly furnished, they cannot meet the exigencies of the times.

Every one feels that he has no advantages over the enemies of the gospel, except that they are advocating error, while he advocates truth. And the Christian minister feels that he must be prepared, in science, and literature, and philosophy, to meet his opponents, whoever they may be.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REVIVAL.

A MORE distinct conception of the cause, progress, and effect of a revival of religion, may be communicated by describing a particular case, than by dwelling upon generalities. The writer will therefore proceed to give a minute description of a revival, the progress of which, from its commencement to its close, he had opportunity to observe.

In the summer of 1831, the churches throughout the whole of the United States, were under the influence of unusually deep religious feeling. The spirit of prayer was general and fervent, and unwearied efforts were made to awaken the community to a sense of their obligations to their Maker. These efforts God most abundantly blessed. Every religious newspaper was filled with most animating reports of the numbers who here and there were coming out from the world, and taking a decided stand, as the friends and the disciples of Jesus. The means adopted for the promotion of these revivals, were a series of religious meet-

ings, as on the sabbath, for several, usually for four, successive days.

It was argued, that generally at the close of the sabbath, there was a degree of solemnity upon many minds, which the bustle and business of the succeeding week immediately effaced, but which would be probably deepened, by fastening the attention for two or three successive days, upon the things of faith, so as to lead to repentance and conversion.

It was argued, that as the Holy Spirit operated through, or at least in connection with, human instrumentality, it was the duty of the Christian to use all the means in his power to lead others to reflect deeply and continually upon their spiritual interests, and that such a series of religious services was particularly adapted to awaken rational conviction.

And again, it was said that similar religious festivals were common among the Jews, and that the primitive and inspired preachers of the gospel, preached whenever and wherever they could get people to hear.

These arguments, or more properly, the triumphant success which attended these meetings, whenever they were held, almost immediately convinced the great mass of Christians in the land, of the expediency of these new measures. The few who looked on with timidity and caution, were unwilling to utter a word in opposition to measures, which were filling the land with rejoicing converts.

The land of revivals of religion, never witnessed

such a scene of wide-spread and deep religious feeling.

The learned and the unlearned, the moral and the vicious, the poor and the wealthy, were alike convinced of sin, and led to penitence and reliance upon a Saviour's merits for salvation.

In the town of W——, in the interior of one of the New England States, a town containing about five thousand inhabitants, the state of religion at this time was very unpromising. The two evangelical churches in the town, had for several years been engaged in a contention the most disgraceful, and the most disastrous. The consequence of this, of course, had been to strengthen in the town the influence of irreligion. Christians, professing exactly the same creed, and united in the same form of worship, were arranged in hostility against each other. Brotherly love, and united effort were unknown. Under these circumstances, it was in vain to hope for a blessing from God. Every day intelligence was reaching these churches of the wonderful visitations of the Lord in other places—of the union of affection, which existed among Christians of every name. These tidings, which contrasted so strongly with the coldness and the desolation of their own religious prospects, led many to humble themselves before God, and to implore his guidance, that something might be done to remove this hardness of feeling. A few Christians from the two Evangelical Congregational churches and the Baptist church met for consultation and prayer. They enjoyed the interview, and

felt like brethren. Their hearts were united. Another meeting was appointed for Sabbath evening, for all Christians without distinction, who felt interested, to unite in prayer. The meeting was appointed in one of the churches. Though the house was far from full, many more attended than had been anticipated. The pastors, who were present, stood side by side, and pleaded with their people to unite in love and good works. The Lord appeared to confer his blessing on the effort, for harmony was most manifestly promoted, and the hearts of the few who had then assembled were bound together.

Another meeting was appointed for the next Sabbath evening. During the week, the report of this meeting and of its happy result was spreading through the town. It became the topic of common conversation, and the enemies of religion began to fear it would operate to the overthrow of their cause. Sabbath evening came. The sun was going down the west, in the serene beauty of one of the most lovely summer afternoons. But instead of here and there a solitary Christian wending his way to the prayer-meeting, the avenues to the church were thronged with the multitude pressing on to the house of God. Some were moving along with penitent hearts and tearful eyes, and fervent prayers, while others were moved by the impulse of curiosity, to ascertain what this strange thing meant. The church was nearly filled, and the silence and solemnity which pervaded the congregation, showed that deep feelings were called into exercise in the bosoms of those who were assembled.

One of the pastors present opened the meeting by reading a hymn, and seemingly, every heart was united in making melody to the Lord. A member then from one of the churches, was called upon to lead in prayer. God had evidently prepared his heart to forget party spirit and sectarian pride, and he thought of but one object—the glory of the Redeemer in the salvation of sinners. As he earnestly implored God's assistance in accomplishing this, by uniting the hearts of Christians, and combining their energies, almost every Christian present said Amen to the prayer. Intelligence was then read respecting the rapid progress of religion in other parts of the country, the harmony which prevailed among professors of every denomination, and the success with which God was crowning their efforts. Another hymn was then sung, followed by remarks from one of the pastors, urging upon the hearts of all present the motives of the gospel. The interest of the occasion communicated unwonted fervor to the feelings of the speaker, and by the mysterious influence of mind upon mind, God transfused this fervor through the assembly. Another prayer was offered by a lay brother, followed by additional remarks by another of the pastors. A hymn was then sung, another prayer offered, and then the whole assembly rose to unite in the closing hymn.

Lord ! dismiss us with thy blessing ;
Fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, thy love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace.
Oh ! refresh us,
Travelling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give, and adoration,
For thy gospel's joyful sound;
May the fruits of thy salvation,
In our hearts and lives abound:
May thy presence,
With us evermore be found.

So, whene'er the signal's given
Us from earth to call away;
Borne on angel's wings to heaven,
Glad to leave our cumbrous clay,
May we ready,
Rise and reign in endless day.

From the commencement to the close of the meeting, the tide of feeling was swelling higher and higher; or, I should rather say, emotions of humility and of penitence were penetrating deeper and deeper. As we rose to sing the parting hymn, solemnity pervaded the whole congregation, and many an eye was moistened with tears. Another meeting was appointed for the ensuing Sabbath, and the congregation retired with a sense of the reality and importance of religion not often felt before.

Still there were many professors of religion who had not countenanced these meetings by their presence. But during the week, the subject was much talked of, and they heard from their brethren of the enjoyment and the blessedness of the interview. The careless and the irreligious in the town began to predict from these appearances, that there would be a revival of religion, and some rejoiced, hoping to become its subjects, while others were enraged from fear that a check would be thrown upon their sins.

Another Sabbath came, and the house was filled to overflowing. Above and below, every seat was occupied, and not a few were standing at the doors, unable to find accommodation in the house. What a change in three short weeks! Before these meetings commenced, coldness and jealousy existed among Christians; carelessness as to religious things reigned throughout the town, and religion was too inoperative to excite hostility, or even apprehension, in those who love to live undisturbed in sin. Now the great majority of Christians were united in heart, and combining in effort and in prayer. They actually

> 'Shared each other's joys,
> Their mutual burdens bare,
> And often for each other flowed
> The sympathising tear.'

It was not the mockery of union, but a real union of feeling, and a oneness of purpose. And no one who heard the prayers which were then uttered, or who witnessed the solemnity which then prevailed, could doubt the sincerity which animated the hearts of Christians, and the intensity of their desire that their fellow-men might be saved.

Several, who had hitherto lived thoughtless and unconcerned, began to reflect and to be alarmed, and as the ministers went during the week from house to house, in the performance of their parochial duties, they found in not a few dwellings, anxious inquirers for salvation. Christians felt a solicitude for others and an interest in the cause

of Christ, to which they had long been strangers, and they felt encouraged to make exertions.

They felt that God had elevated the valley and depressed the mountain, and prepared a highway for his triumphant approach. They thought that now was the time to commence a series of religious meetings to perpetuate, extend, and deepen the impressions already awakened. With great unanimity it was resolved, that such a series of meetings should be held for four continuous days, by a union of the two Congregational churches and the Baptist church. A day was appointed for the commencement of these meetings, about four weeks distant. During the interval, the Sabbath evening meetings were continued, with constantly increasing interest and deepening emotion. There were still, perhaps a few professors of religion, who stood aloof from all these movements, but, whoever they were, they had wisdom enough to perceive, that opposition would be hopeless. The current of feeling was flowing too deep and too strong to be rolled back.

At one of these Sabbath-evening meetings, all of the Christians present publicly pledged themselves by rising from their seats in the view of the whole congregation, to kneel every night, at the hour of retiring to rest, to pray for a blessing upon the contemplated protracted meetings. Thus the chamber of every Christian, as well as the consecrated house of God, witnessed the fervour of united prayer. That Christian heart must have been cold indeed, which would not melt in such

affecting scenes. And many a hardened sinner, while witnessing the interest which others felt for his salvation, and hearing the earnest supplications which they were offering in his behalf to God, was constrained to feel and pray for himself. But, as yet, there was no general anxiety. Many were much interested, and wondering where these things would end. A few were inquiring what they must do to be saved, and occasional cases were found of those, who entertained the hope that they had renounced their sins, and given themselves to the Saviour.

Such was the state of feeling, when the protracted meetings commenced. Several distinguished clergymen had been invited in from other towns to aid in the exercises of the occasion. The services commenced with a prayer-meeting at five o'clock, Tuesday morning. There was nothing very especially interesting in the meeting. As many were present as could have been expected; prayers were offered by clergymen and laymen, with occasional and very brief remarks to Christians upon their responsibilities and duties during the solemnities. The hour passed pleasantly and all retired. Public services were appointed at half past ten in the morning, in the largest church in the town, and the church members were requested to assemble half an hour before the public meeting in an adjoining church for conference and prayer.

The prayer-meeting was well attended, and more solemnity prevailed. Christians were urged to examine their own hearts with diligence, that they

might not be cherishing any feelings, or indulging in any sins which would stand in the way of a blessing from God. At the appointed hour for public services, the church was about two-thirds filled. The exercises were conducted as usual upon the Sabbath; first, there was a short prayer, or rather invocation, then a chapter was read in the Bible, then a hymn sung, then another prayer, which was followed by a sermon, and the benediction dismissed the assembly. The services were solemn and impressive, and the congregation dispersed with increased interest, to attend in the afternoon. At two o'clock, the church members assembled by themselves, for conference and prayer. They were urged to be faithful in secret prayer; to embrace every opportunity to converse with their neighbours, and to induce all that they could, to attend the meetings. At half past two, the public services again commenced. The number of hearers was increased, and the house was nearly filled. At half past seven in the evening, the bell again rung, to assemble the people, and the house was filled. I do not recollect upon what subject the preacher discoursed, but there was a manifest intensity of attention and solemnity of aspect, which taught those who were accustomed to witness revivals of religion, to anticipate a favourable issue from the meetings. Thus passed the first day. At its close, Christians felt encouraged, but some of the most sanguine were disappointed, in not seeing such manifest tokens of the Divine presence as they had anticipated.

Wednesday morning dawned. The five o'clock prayer-meeting was attended by a large number, and prayers were offered under the influence of deep feeling. The exercises were in the same order as the preceeding day, and continued the same during all the meetings. The following was the order of exercises:

At 5 o'clock in the morning, prayer-meeting for one hour.
10 Prayer-meeting, half an hour.
10½ Public service, two hours.
2 Prayer-meeting, half an hour.
2½ Public service, two hours.
7½ Evening public service, an hour and a half.

Such was the general arrangement, from the commencement to the close. The public service at half past ten, Wednesday forenoon, was not so fully attended as was expected, and Christians felt much alarmed, from fear the interest was abating, and that curiosity alone caused the full meeting of the preceding evening. There was a rush of despondency to almost every heart. The preacher apparently felt disappointed, and did not obtain that hold upon the attention of the audience, which had previously been witnessed. It was rather a mournful meeting; and as the congregation dispersed, Christians retired to their homes, depressed and disconsolate. With saddened hearts, they assembled at the afternoon prayer-meeting, and the question was urged in address to Christians and in prayer to God, "Why hast thou forsaken us?"

Every heart seemed humbled before God, and glowing with intensity of desire, that he would come and grant a blessing upon the efforts which His children were making, to advance the interests of his kingdom. The peculiar circumstances in which they were placed, caused them to sink beneath the burden of responsibility which they felt was placed upon them. It was one of the most solemn and affecting scenes which could be witnessed on earth. They felt that the eternal interests of many were depending upon the result of these meetings. They had been most fervently praying for a blessing upon the whole community. They had been rejoicing in the hope that their own families and beloved friends would be brought into the kingdom of the Redeemer,—and now they feared that all their hopes would be blighted; that the meetings would languish to a feeble and ineffectual close, and that irreligion would be emboldened by this signal failure.

Almost every eye was suffused in tears, and every heart appeared to unite in the most earnest supplication for aid from on high. I am not guilty of extravagance in saying, that there was almost an agony of anxious feeling.

But, as the bell tolled that invited the multitude to the house of God, it became necessary to leave the prayer-meeting. But Christians went with prayerful spirits, and resolved to continue to implore God's blessing during all the services of the afternoon. The house was crowded; the speaker spake under the influence of the feelings which

were manifested at the season of prayer. Silent prayers were ascending to God from all parts of the house for a blessing, and every word seemed to come from the speaker's heart, and to take hold of the hearts of the hearers. Every eye was fixed upon the speaker, and bathed in tears. Many Christians who entered the house weeping with sorrow, left it shedding tears of joy.

The evening meeting was crowded; even the aisles were filled and the doors thronged. And that vast congregation appeared to bow in silence and solemnity to the majesty of truth. Every one perceived that there was a general impression throughout the whole congregation, that the claims of religion were of too great importance to be longer postponed. There is something peculiar, and most indiscribably solemn in the appearance of a vast assemblage, all yielding themselves up to the conviction of truth. To read the workings of the mind in the countenance; to see the bosom heaving with emotion, the eye bathed in tears, to see this spread over a whole assembly of those who were but a few hours before thoughtless and unconcerned, is a scene which cannot soon be forgotten. Such was the scene this evening. None seemed prepared for it, and yet the mind was so borne away from the ordinary scenes of life, and the realities of eternity were so vividly presented, that Christians were almost prepared to believe, that not an individual in the town could resist the force of truth, the claims of God, so reasonable and so distinctly shown.

Every domestic altar that evening probably witnessed unwonted fervour of prayer. And thus, in the various domestic circles where prayer was offered, was the impression deepened.

When the church members assembled at the five o'clock prayer-meeting on Thursday morning, tidings were communicated from different families and different neighbourhoods, of many who were anxiously inquiring what they must do to be saved. Trembling was united with rejoicing, as thanks were given to God for blessings already conferred, and as with deep solicitude, he was implored still more abundantly to bless us.

The forenoon service was well attended, and the conviction of the importance of immediately attending to the concerns of religion, seemed to penetrate still deeper into the feelings of the assembly. The interests of the soul, the realities of eternity, were pressed upon the attention, and almost every mind surrendered itself to the influence of divine truth. At the close of the exercises, all those who felt anxious for their souls' salvation, and who were resolved immediately to enter upon the duties of a Christian life, were requested to repair to a neighbouring hall for private conversation and prayer.

Notwithstanding the evidence which had been afforded of deep interest, the clergymen present were surprised, and affected to tears, at seeing nearly three hundred persons of all ages and both sexes, crowding into the room for inquiry. The clergymen, after scattering into different parts of the room, to converse for ten or fifteen minutes,

with as many as possible, met together again, and reported respecting the general state of feeling. One then addressed them upon the importance of immediately choosing the service of God, and imploring the aid of the Holy Spirit, to enable them to carry their resolutions into effect.

There was in this meeting of inquiry all characters and all classes. The profane man sat there with downcast eyes and broken heart. The hardened profligate, who for years had defied the laws of both God and man, with trembling and with weeping, asked, "What must I do to be saved?" There sat the man who had long been fortifying his soul against divine truth by error. The moral and the amiable were there, with full confession of having lived in the world without God, and without hope. If it be possible that any external manifestations should give evidence of repentance, we may believe there was joy in the presence of the angels of God, as they gazed upon the scene.

The afternoon services were attended with still increasing evidences of the divine presence and blessing. There was, in the preaching, no exciting appeal to the passions, but a calm and earnest reasoning upon righteousness and a judgment to come. The preaching was eminently instructive and argumentative. It appealed to the understanding, and in view of eternal and irrefutable truth, pressed upon men the claims of God's law. The persons present were not a crowd of the volatile and uninformed, who could be blown hither and thither, by every wind of doctrine, but men of sound under-

standings and independent minds, who were not accustomed to receive assertion for argument, or declamation for truth. They who preached had respect for the understandings of those who heard, and urged upon them with tremendous energy, the all-controlling motives of the gospel. The weapon they had to operate with, was no less than the sword of the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit was present, to wield his own weapon with mighty power. And you would at times almost see, as sentence after sentence fell from the lips of the speaker, that conviction was carried home to the hearts of those, who in such breathless silence were receiving the truth.

The evening service was attended with like results. And though there was no audible expression of anxiety; though solemnity, and silence, and order pervaded the house, the speaking countenance, and the suffused eye bespoke most plainly the emotions of the heart. And when at the close of the exercises all those were invited to remain for more particular instruction, who were resolved to choose the Saviour for their friend, and take the Bible for their rule of life; it was, indeed, affecting to behold nearly the whole house, above and below, filled with those who were willing, thus openly, to profess solicitude for their spiritual interests.

The next day was the fourth and last of these religious meetings. Increased and increasing solemnity was manifested during all the exercises. The truths of the gospel appeared to carry conviction of their reality and importance to all who

heard. The preaching and the addresses during the day were directed to the heart, through the understanding. The whole was but an earnest exhibition of the government of God, and the responsibilities of man. Much has been written upon the subject of revivals of religion, and the enemies of the spirit and the power of the gospel, have presented the most exaggerated caricatures of the scenes which are then witnessed. Some attended these meetings, hoping to see wild enthusiasm, and to witness the operation of moral machinery, cunningly adapted to excite and terrify the mind. But they were disappointed in witnessing nothing but plain exhibitions of eternal truth, addressed to the understandings of reasonable men. And they were still more disappointed in finding that hundreds were feeling the power of these truths, and were looking with well-grounded apprehension upon their eternal prospects, and were anxiously inquiring what they must do to be saved.

Does any one ask, 'How was this inquiry answered?' They were told that they must place all their reliance upon the atoning sacrifice of the Saviour, and shew their penitence for past neglect of duty, in constant endeavours for the future, to do the will of God. They were told that they must constantly implore the aid of the Holy Spirit, to enable them to resist temptation, and to keep their hearts fixed on God; that they must immediately make this entire surrender of themselves to their maker, and be ready publicly to avow their attachment, and openly to advocate his cause.

They were told that a holy life afforded the only satisfactory evidence of a change of heart, and that it was only by enduring to the end, that they could be saved.

Many hoped before the meetings were closed, that they had made that surrender, which they were convinced was their reasonable service. And many of them have thus far continued to give evidence of a circumspect and a holy life.

There are a few who for a time appeared well; but their seriousness was as the early cloud, and as the morning dew. They went out from us, because they were not of us. There have been apostacies in the church, from the time of Judas till now, and it must be feared that for some time to come, there will be occasional admissions of hypocrites and the self-deceived.

A prayer-meeting at five o'clock Saturday morning, terminated the solemnities of this interesting occasion. Notice was then given, that the pastors of the respective churches would be at home during the day, to converse with any who felt anxious for their soul's salvation. The writer of this chapter passed the whole of the day till nine o'clock in the evening, conversing with those who called.

One person would come in, almost in despair, feeling that he had sinned so long, and resisted so much love, that he was beyond the reach of mercy.

Another would come with but little conviction of sin, but deeply impressed with the importance of immediately attending to his soul's concerns.

Another would appear, doubting, hoping, trem-

bling and rejoicing; at one moment happy in the belief that his sins were forgiven, and again desponding through fear, that it was all a delusion, and that he was still in the guilt of unrepented sin.

The smile that cheered the countenance of the fourth, proclaimed in language more forcible than words, that there was peace and joy in the heart.

The day was employed in endeavouring to adapt instruction to these different cases. A few moments of free conversation were terminated with a short prayer. The ensuing Sabbath saw the evangelical churches of the town thronged with a most solemn audience. He who opened the heart of Lydia to receive the things which were spoken of Paul, opened the hearts of this people to receive the truth which they so long had disregarded. It was believed by pastors and people, that the Holy Spirit had been sent in answer to prayers, and that it was not by human might, or human power, that this work was done.

The revival thus commenced, continued for several weeks, till gradually the interest subsided. The general course of procedure during this time, was to preach three sermons on the Sabbath, and at the close of the evening lecture, to request inquirers to remain, to be more particularly addressed, and prayed with. There was also an evening lecture during the week, and an inquiry meeting, in which personal conversation was held with each of the inquirers, and on Saturday evening, a church prayer-meeting, not attended by the pastors of the churches.

There were not less than four or five hundred, who within a few weeks, became, it is believed, the disciples of the Saviour. Most of these are now members of churches, in good standing. A few, and but very few, have since exposed themselves to church censure.

Such were the means which were used, and the results which attended these means. Revivals have, for a long time, been in extensive operation in this country, long before protracted meetings were thought of by the churches. I have, however, preferred to give an account of one, in connexion with such a meeting, because I was more intimately acquainted with its progress, than with any other, from its commencement to its close.

If we ought to rejoice to see the worldly become spiritual, the profane prayerful, the impure chaste; if we ought to rejoice to see the family altar erected, the Sabbath obeyed, and the commands of God honoured, then ought we to rejoice with exceeding great joy over the result of this revival of religion. If there be any such thing as evidence of penitence, and amendment of life, we think it is to be perceived in many, who then resolved to forsake all known sin, and to live to the glory of God. We do therefore feel it to be our privilege to share in that joy which we believe was awakened in heaven, as the angels there looked down upon the affecting scene of repenting sinners.

CHAPTER V.

SLAVERY.

It may seem strange, that the subject of Slavery is taken up in a treatise upon New England and her Institutions. There is not a slave in New England. But New-England is a portion of a confederate nation, in which slavery is tolerated; and what is New England doing to sustain or to abrogate this system of cruelty or oppression?

When the union was formed, which bound these states together, as one nation, certain rights were surrendered by the individual states to the general government; such as the power to make war and peace, the right to impose duties for the collection of a national revenue, &c. But each state remained entirely independent of all the rest, except in those cases in which it had surrendered its powers to the Congress of the United States. Maine has no more to do with the internal polity of Georgia and Carolina, than she has with the parliament of Great Britain, or the government of Russia. The United States Congress cannot interfere with the laws of the individual states, any more than she

can with the laws of any other nations of the earth, with whom she is on terms of amity. And here lies one great difficulty in the way of touching the subject; an insuperable obstacle in the way of touching it by the power of law. The Carolinas, or Virginia, would fly to arms as instantly, if the United States government should interfere with this subject, as would Great Britain, if the French government should proclaim freedom to the slaves in the British West Indies, and adopt measures to carry her proclamation into effect. The United States government cannot move upon this subject, without usurping powers which do not belong to her. And it would ill become Congress to free the slave, by becoming itself the tyrant. What then has New England to do upon this subject? She cannot, in her own State legislatures, act upon the laws of the other States. She cannot, by her representatives in Congress, assume powers which the constitution denies her. *Legally*, she cannot touch the subject at all. Perhaps the homely, but sensible adage, will be quoted, 'A man is known by the company he keeps.' It will perhaps be said, that if New England cannot interfere for the removal of so odious a system, she ought not to be associated with such bad company; she ought not, by union with such States, to countenance a system, so fraught with every abomination. We cannot deny that there is occasion for the remark, and will not attempt an apology, which at the best, we can maintain but poorly. And yet New England has a right to feel interested in the subject, and to remon-

strate against a system which is continually exciting suspicion and alienation between the north and the south. In case of a servile insurrection, carrying fire and blood through the southern States, the citizen of the north must shoulder the musket and march to quell it. Yes, our star-spangled banner must be uplifted, and our sons of freedom must be arrayed, against those who are contending only for their liberty. As in cases of emergency we must fight, it surely is not unreasonable that we should remonstrate with our brethren, against their increasing danger and ours. What then can be done? The only thing is to enlighten the public mind, and to convince our southern brethren of the necessity of enfranchisement, and of the way in which it may be safely accomplished. There is but one opinion in New England upon this subject. All admit the iniquity of the system, the horrors with which it is replete, and the inevitable ruin which must accrue, if the evil be not speedily removed. It is true that different individuals feel with different degrees of intensity upon this subject. Some are so excited and agitated by the appalling facts which are continually brought to light, that they are unable to reason soberly, or to speak calmly upon the subject. Others fold their arms in the indolent belief, that nothing can be done, and that all effort is unavailing.

Those, however, who feel most deeply interested in the subject, and whose consciences will not allow them to slumber, when such a system of injustice and cruelty prevails in the land, are divided into two parties, the friends of co-

lonization, and the enemies of colonization. These parties are marshalled under the names of the Colonization Society, and the Anti-slavery Society. Both profess to be most anxious for the extinction of slavery, and to be pursuing those measures which they believe to be best adapted to promote the speedy and effectual removal of the evil. The colonizationists say, that by establishing a colony in Africa—

I. They afford a home for the oppressed and discouraged free blacks, where they can rise to the dignity of real freedom, without being kept down by those adverse circumstances which here crush them to the earth. They say the prejudices against receiving the blacks into business, and into society, is so strong, that it is impossible that it should be speedily removed, and that if we would elevate the negro to that intellectual and moral dignity to which he is capable of being raised, we must remove him from the operation of those prejudices with which he now is surrounded.

II. They say that though the great majority of free blacks are unwilling to go to Liberia, there are more who are desirous to go, than we have ability to send; and that those who are unwilling to go, are prejudiced by the false representations of the colony, which its enemies have presented them.

III. They say that by planting a colony in Africa, they open a channel through which any slave-holder may give freedom to his slaves. In many of the slave-holding states, the laws will not permit a man to liberate his slaves, and allow them to remain in the state;

on the ground that such a step promotes disaffection in the other plantations. It would be the height of cruelty, they maintain, to carry them to the borders of the state, and ignorant and undisciplined as they are, to turn them pennyless upon the world. Most of the slaves, it is said, would plead with many tears against such kindness. It is also said that the planters are entirely unable to provide their slaves with the means of subsistence after they are liberated. The Colonization Society says to every planter who is ready to liberate his slaves, 'We are ready to receive them, and give them a home in Africa, and to supply all their needful wants, till they are able to sustain themselves.' They say that in this way, one slave-holder after another is relinquishing his slaves, that the power of example is felt, and is spreading: that every obstacle is thus removed out of the way of emancipation, and that thus, by an indirect influence which is perfectly honest and unobjectionable, the whole system is being undermined, and soon must inevitably fall.

Says a gentleman, who was himself a slave-holder, but who has liberated all his slaves, and given them a home in Liberia;—'Slavery was devolved upon us by Great Britain, and slaves were left here in such numbers, that a regard for personal safety has induced the respective legislatures to enact laws prohibiting emancipation, except upon condition that the freed men be removed. To violate these laws, is not only to incur a penalty, but if the black man is not removed, he is sold again into slavery. The question then is, is

it better for them to emigrate abroad, as freemen, or to remain in slavery at home. If by preventing their emigration abroad, they are retained at home, who keeps them there? On whom rests the responsibility? The Colonization Society advocates the alternative, of sending them abroad to be free; the Abolitionists, that of keeping them in slavery at home. Let each one decide for himself, on which side the guilt or preference lies. I personally know the masters of thousands of slaves, who would gladly emancipate them if they could; but their poverty precludes them from sending them away, and the laws do not allow them to remain free at home. Fifty thousand per annum might be emancipated, if the means could be found to convey them abroad. These are facts, which, right or wrong in themselves, must be taken into account, when arguing the question of colonization.

IV. It is also urged, that as colonization does not directly touch the subject of slavery, its doctrines can be advanced in any part of the union without fear. That you can thus gain access to the mind of the slave-holder, and plead the many wrongs of the negro;—that a direct interference with slavery by a northern man, is regarded by the southerners as an intrusion to which they will not submit, and that by attempting it, we do but harden their hearts, and confirm their prejudices, and arouse their hostility.

V. It is said again, that by planting colonies upon the coast of Africa, we do most effectually break up the slave trade, and that in this way we

may soon guard the whole coast, from the Cape to the Mediterranean, from the ravages of those fiends in the shape of men, who have so long been filling Africa with widows and with orphans, with tears and blood. There is no reason why Africa should not rise, as America has risen, and the influence of these colonies may fill the land with a free, and virtuous, and intelligent population. They have confidently hoped to see the English language, with all its treasures of wisdom, pervading the great portion of that continent. In imagination, they see cities and villages rising, as by magic, through the land, steam-boats ploughing her waves, fertility spreading over her vallies, and flocks and herds feeding upon her hills; the natives reclaimed to God, and incense and a pure offering ascending from every heart.

VI. And again it is said, the influence of this colony tends to the elevation of the whole African race, not only in the United States, but throughout the earth. This unhappy people in our free States, are so spread over the land, and their condition is literally so obscure, that they make no distinct impression upon the public mind. They are emphatically a people scattered and peeled, as a race of men, and in their condition, they are (so to speak) lost in the crowd. It would conduce to their welfare, if we could but embody them in one neighbourhood, even in all their wretchedness. Such a congregation would invite, and perhaps secure our attention; the object would stand out before us in some distinctive features. This society now takes

them out of the great mass, where the public eye cannot fix upon them; gives them a distinct existence, 'a local habitation, and a name;' and this, not as slaves, not as degraded hewers of wood and drawers of water, but as free men, pursuing all the business, and fulfilling all the duties of a rational and Christian community. Their dwelling place has a designation upon the map of the world—we hear of them in their laws, their government, and commerce; their citizens come among us as men of trade and business. Who can fail to trace in such circumstances, some of the most powerful of moral causes? These must exert an influence that will be deeply felt.

Again in this distinct community, the demonstration has been made, that the African is equal to the duties of a freeman. His mind expands as his condition improves. This settlement pleads the cause of freedom with strong and constant emphasis. Its first effect is, to draw forth our sympathies for the black man, not as heretofore, and for long generations, in the light of a poor, depressed, and degraded being; but as the elevated citizen of a government free as our own, favoured as our own, and by the blessing of God, destined to become as populous and great. These sympathies extend themselves over the whole race. Liberia stands the representative of all her people. The most wretched tribe in Africa is raised to a more hopeful condition by this relation. The coloured race over the whole earth, is reached by this elevating fellowship.

VII. The colonizationists defend the feasibility

of their plan by such calculations as the following: 'The whole population of the United States is estimated as something more than 12,000,000 of human beings. The relative proportions of white and black population, are as ten to two. If we could transplant annually to the shores of Africa, an amount of black population exactly equal to its increase, (which is about 50,000 a year) while the white were left to multiply uninterruptedly; then at the end of twenty-five years, (the period of duplication,) the result would be thus: The white population will have increased by its full amount, and perhaps to a greater, by reason of the vacuum formed in society by the withdrawal of the increase of the blacks; while the black population, which cannot increase, or rather, whose increase is constantly taken off, will be most sensibly diminished, so that the relative proportions between these two classes will no longer be as ten to two, but actually or nearly, as twenty to one. If this process were continued a second term of duplication, it would produce the extraordinary result of forty white men to one black in the country—a state of things in which we should not only cease to feel the burdens which now hang so heavily upon us, but actually regard the poor African as an object of curiosity, and not of uneasiness. This purpose can be effected (always supposing that the demands of the society for transportation will be supplied by voluntary emancipation) by an annual expenditure of 1,000,000 dollars. This sum can be raised by a contribution of ten cents a head upon our white

population. How paltry the sum! How grand the object! If the attention of all the legislatures of the slave-holding States could be duly awakened on the subject, their appropriations, added to the voluntary offerings of the patriot and philanthropist, would amply meet the requisite expenditure. Why should we doubt it? We hear the evils of slavery echoed from north to south, from east to west. The universal voice of the nation is heard, lamenting the curse which has been entailed upon us, without our wish or agency, by our ancestors. Is it an empty sound—an idle profession without meaning. Let us not libel the virtue and goodness of our country by so unworthy a supposition;—let us strive to make known the principles of our society, and the purposes it seeks to effect, and we may then confidently expect that cheering and animating support which a good cause always receives from a great people.'

Such is the train of reasoning pursued by the friends of colonization in New England. Such are the principles upon which they advocate the cause. And these principles have enlisted in behalf of this society, a large majority of the wise, and learned, and pious of our land.

But here the Anti-Slavery Society comes in, and presents a picture as painful, as the above is pleasing. They maintain,

I. That the tendency of the Colonization Society is, to perpetuate slavery. While admitting that many of its friends and supporters in the north, are actuated by the most benevolent motives, still they contend that its direct and inevitable tendency, is

to put far distant the day of emancipation. It is argued that the removal of the free blacks, in a great degree removes the occasions of discontent among the slaves, and by thus taking from the planters all fear of insurrection, they are encouraged to let the system remain as it is, without any effort for its removal. They say that many planters at the south thus understand its tendency, and advocate it for the avowed purpose of giving them a stronger hold upon the slaves; and that while the agents of the society in the north are showing its tendency to remove slavery, the agents of the Society in the south are gaining the favour of the slave-holder, by showing how it will confirm his unlawful possessions. It also presents itself as the sufficient remedy for slavery, and thus the consciences of the slave-holders are appeased, by feeling that they may wait for the tardy operations of this society, before they manumit their slaves.

II. It is also said, that colonies, composed of such ignorant persons as the slaves and free negroes of this country, are but poorly adapted to evangelize a heathen shore, and that they will defraud and oppress the natives, and transplant to Africa the vices and crimes, rather than the virtues of this civilized land. If we would benefit Africa, we must send there educated Christian Missionaries, and not empty upon her shores hordes of those, whose influence we fear at home.

III. The tendency of colonization-measures, is to strengthen the prejudices now existing against the coloured man in this country. It is said that

the colonizationists, instead of endeavouring to overthrow that prejudice, represent it as invincible, and thus leave the impression upon the minds of the community, that God intended that the black man and the white man should never be associated.

It is said that the colonizationists confirm this prejudice, that they represent it as a fixed and unalterable law of our nature, and that they are under the necessity of doing this, that they may have a satisfactory reason for endeavouring to elevate them in another country, rather than in our own. 'The very *existence* of the society is owing to this prejudice; for if we could make all the coloured people white, or if they could be received as impartially as if they were white, what would be left for the Colonization Society to do?'

IV. They say the idea of colonizing the greater portion of Negroes now in America, on the coast of Africa, is perfectly visionary. The whole number of our coloured population is about two millions and a half. They are increasing at the rate of between fifty and sixty thousand a year, and it is said we may as wisely undertake to empty the ocean by drops, as to make any apparent diminution of this vast multitude, by the feeble influence of colonization.

The Society has been in operation more than fifteen years, in which time it has transported between two and three thousand free people of colour. There are in the United States two millions of slaves, and three hundred thousand free blacks; and their numbers are increasing at the

rate of nearly sixty thousand annually. While the Society have removed less than three thousand, nearly a million have been born. While one hundred and fifty free blacks have been sent to Africa in a year, two hundred slaves have been born in a *day*. To keep the evil just where it is, sixty thousand a year must be transported. How many ships, and how many millions of money, would it require to do this? It would cost 3,500,000 dollars a year, to provide for the safety of our southern brethren, in this way! To use the language of Mr. Hayne, it would 'exhaust the treasury of the world,' to execute the scheme. And if such a vast number could be removed annually, how would the poor creatures subsist? Famine has already been produced, even by the few that have been sent. What would be the result of landing several thousand destitute beings, even on the most fertile of our own cultivated shores.

V. And again, that even if it were possible to drain our country of its coloured population, the measure would be calamitous, for as citizens, they are too valuable to be lost. With our widely extended country, it is for our interest to *invite* emigrants, and not to urge our own citizens from our shores. We need the coloured population of our southern States, as free labourers, to cultivate the plantations. Their constitutions are adapted to the climate, their habits of life to the toil, and it is the height of folly to deprive ourselves of their valuable labour—labour which for the present, at least, cannot be performed by the white man.

VI. It is said that God has frowned upon the colony at Liberia—that vice reigns there unchecked —that pestilence is borne on almost every breeze— that those who in Liberia, testify in favour of the colony, are bribed so to do; that those who are silent are afraid to tell of their grievances, for a strong arm is ready to chastise them, if they are so presumptuous as to murmur. Vice, poverty, and pestilence are the three great elements of the colony at Liberia, and the man who now engages in the slave trade is merciful, in comparison with the man, who knowing the true state of the case, will aid in sending emigrants to that place.

For these reasons, the Anti-Slavery Society declares the Colonization Society to be the greatest obstacle in the way of the amelioration of the condition of the coloured race; that it obstructs the progress of emancipation, and that the first efforts of the abolitionist must be directed to its destruction. These efforts have been made with most untiring zeal, and with no inconsiderable success. Many of the former friends of colonization have become the opposers of that cause. Still, at the present moment, the great mass of the intellectual and moral worth of the land, is decidedly in favour of colonization. The Anti-Slavery Society has been, however, during the past year, and now is, rapidly gaining converts from its numbers. Not a few are greatly perplexed respecting the path of duty. They hesitate in their support of colonization, lest its tendency should be such as its foes most earnestly declare that it is. Yet they fear to oppose this society, or to

withdraw from it their influence, as they are so strongly inclined to believe that it is the only way in which New England can effectually touch this most fearful subject.

Such is the present state of the public mind in New England, upon this agitating question; and society here is agitated upon it, to its very centre. The waters of the body politic are troubled. A storm is gathering, upon which many are looking with fear and dread. What the result will be, He only knows, who rides upon the tempest, and who rules the elements. There are not a few who fear that without some providential interposition, blood-shed must finally ensue. Slavery is the fruitful source of nearly all our national difficulties. This great national sin is continually exciting suspicion, and producing alienation between the south and the north. It is the origin of the Tariff strife, and the parent of nullification. There is many a northerner, who is resolved to give himself no rest, till every slave in the land goes free. There is many a southerner, who is resolved to see the union severed, and his wife and his children and himself weltering in blood, before he will submit to northern interference.

The great majority of the people at the north, while they execrate the system of slavery, do not forget that it is an evil which was entailed upon our southern brethren, and not one which they chose for themselves. They know, that while there are some who justify slavery, and wish to see it perpetuated, there are not a few in the southern states who are

the disciples of Jesus Christ, and who wish to do to others as they would that others should do to them. And while they cannot deny that the former class would be the deserved victim of the sword and the axe of the insurgent negro, they sympathize with the latter, and regard them as subjects of commiseration, and not of indignation. This latter class feel upon the subject of slavery, as do many of their brethren at the north, and they are daily praying that the Lord will open the door for the safe and speedy enfranchisement of all the slaves.

The prospect before us is a dark one. Our only hope is in the interposition of that God who has already carried us through so many scenes of danger. The Lord has not a few in the land, who are the self-denying followers of his Son. Their prayers are daily directed to Him, that He will avert the approaching calamity. It cannot, it must not be, that our country will long be disgraced with so foul a stain. Such a comment upon our declaration of independence; such a caricature of our loud vaunted freedom, cannot long be endured. God is overwhelming us with shame, in view of the inconsistency. The clanking of chains are heard at the very door of our capitol. The negro-driver cracks his whip, as he passes the senators and representatives in the streets of Washington. The husband and the wife, the mother and the child, are sold at public auction in our southern cities, and by the power of the lash, torn from each other's embrace, and carried into hopeless bondage, never again to meet. Can such things long exist in a land

of Bibles, and of Sabbaths, and of the preached gospel? At this enlightened period of the world, and in a country feeling as America does, the influence of the light, and the learning, and the piety of all other lands, is it possible that slavery, in all these, its most revolting features, can long be sustained? It surely is impossible. Some means must be, and will be, devised to remove the curse, and to let the oppressed go free.

The noble stand which England has made, with all her heavy burden of debt, in assuming new and weighty responsibilities, that the slaves of her colonies may be liberated, has produced an impression in this country, which can never be obliterated. It has quickened the zeal of those who were already zealous. It has aroused the slumbering energies of many who have heretofore been dormant. It has given to our country a solitude of eminence in guilt, which is far from enviable. When we rather rudely and unaffectionately, tore away from the arms of our good mother, the empress of ocean, she bequeathed to us this sad inheritance. And we have, in some degree felt sustained by the reflection, that our slaves were the gift of a mother, who, notwithstanding our little bickerings, we do all most highly revere. And when we have seen that same parent, with all her maturity of wisdom and goodness of heart, fostering her affectionate children, who have remained submissive to her will, by the same gifts, we have felt strengthened by her example. It is natural for children to imitate the parent.

But now, when we have seen our mother, who certainly if not proud, is very high-spirited, fall humbly upon her knees, and confess her faults, and take away from her children, the possessions which she had fraudulently obtained, we feel sadly, sadly troubled. And in this, her confessional, she compels us to respect her still more highly, by the magnanimity she shows, in fully remunerating her children, for the gifts she feels in conscience bound to take away.

Anti-slavery agents, and colonization agents, are now traversing New England. Conventions are called, auxiliaries formed, and addresses delivered, and collections carried on without number. Excitement is pervading the community, and ere long, probably the whole country, from Maine to Florida, will be in a state of ferment. The attention of the community is strongly turned to the black population. At most of the public meetings upon this subject, negroes are brought forward to make addresses. A few individuals of eminence have invited parties, mingling blacks and whites. Some persons have employed them in preference in mechanical labour, hoping thus to elevate them above those most menial services, in which they have hitherto been so exclusively employed. The tide of public feeling is turning, and strongly turning in their favour. But it is to be feared, not only from the tendency of human nature, which is to extremes, but also from the lengths to which many have already gone, that the negroes, scarcely accustomed to so much as even civility of treat-

ment, will be exceedingly elated and injured, by this sudden and marked attention. They are not prepared to be at once drawn from their humble homes, to be honoured guests in the saloons of the wealthy. It is too sudden an elevation, to emerge at a moment from obscurity, to flattery and applause.

Is it asked, in what proportion is New England at present divided, as to colonization and anti-colonization? I reply that nearly all the clergy and all the civilians, and all the moral and intellectual worth of the New England States NOW advocate the principles of colonization. Upon the Sabbath preceding the anniversary of our national independence, from almost every pulpit, its claims have been urged, and a collection received from the congregation in its favour.

The Anti-Slavery Society is comparatively small, and as uninfluential as the character of its leaders. But it is progressing with a rapidity that is astonishing. Every day witnesses its triumphs. Every movement augments its ranks. Every appeal encreases its converts. And though I do not now know of an individual in New England, of celebrity as a Christian or a civilian, who advocates its claims, its principles are fast gaining conquests over minds of higher and higher orders, and it is already a most formidable opponent of colonization. Judging from the results of the past year, it would not be strange to me (though it would perhaps, to others,) if in two years, it should increase in numbers and in influence, so as to outstrip the colonization society.

There are, of course, in New England, as every

where else, individuals who are wrapt up entirely in their own selfish interests, and care nothing for this subject, or any other, which relates to the wrongs of the oppressed. These generally sneer at the efforts of both the above-mentioned societies, and call their supporters fools, for meddling with that which is none of their business. But the number of these is diminishing. There is too much light to be shut out. Conscience speaks too loudly to be silenced. Facts, most appalling and frightful, in view of which the finger of scorn is justly pointed at our boasted liberties, are continually spread out before the world. The slave-dealer goes unmolested in the land. The mother is robbed of her child, and there is no rescue. The clanking of chains is heard upon the persons of those who have committed no crime, and the lash falls upon the bleeding backs of those who are exposed to the irrepressible fury of a passionate driver. The virgin is violated, and there are none to deliver; nay, none to heed her complaint. But now the press begins to lift its voice in louder and still louder thunders—the pulpit begins to plead more earnestly—the mind of the community is excited, intensely excited, and it will not again be stilled, till the year of jubilee has come, and the slaves go free.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INSURRECTION.

On the 21st of August 1831, a very alarming insurrection took place among the slaves of Southampton county, Virginia. A slave by the name of Nat. Turner was the leader in this insurrection. Impelled by the belief that he was divinely called to be the deliverer of his oppressed countrymen, he succeeded in fixing the impression upon the minds of two or three other of his fellow-slaves. Turner could read and write, and these acquirements gave him influence over his associates. He however was possessed of but little information, and is represented as being cowardly and cruel. About midnight, after the Sabbath of the 21st of August, Turner with his confederates burst into his master's house, and murdered every one of the white inmates. They were armed with knives and axes, and in order to strike terror into the whites, most shockingly mangled the bodies of their victims. Neither helpless infancy, nor female loveliness was spared. They then compelled, by threats of death, all the slaves to join them, who would not do it voluntarily,

and rousing themselves to fury by ardent spirits, they proceeded to the next plantation. The family were reposing in the sound and quiet slumbers which precede the break of day, as the shouts of the insurgents fell upon their ears. It was the work of but a moment, and they all were weltering in their gore. Not a white individual was spared to carry the tidings. The blow which destroyed the infant, left its brains upon the hearth. The head of the youthful maiden was in one part of the room, and her mangled body in another. Here again the number of the insurgents was increased by those who voluntarily joined them, and by others who did it through compulsion. Stimulating their passion still more by intoxication, and arming themselves with such guns as they could obtain, some on horse-back and others on foot, they rushed along to the next plantation. The morning now began to dawn, and the shrieks of those who fell under the sword and the axe of the negro, were heard at a distance. The alarm was spread from plantation to plantation, carrying inconceivable terror to every heart. The whites supposed it was a plot, deeply laid, and widely spread, and that the day had come for indiscriminate massacre. One gentleman who heard the appalling tidings, hurried to a neighbouring plantation, and arrived there just in time to hear the dying shrieks of the family, and the triumphant shouts of the negroes. He hastened in terror to his own home, but the negroes were there before him, and his wife and his daughters had already fallen victims to their fury. Thus the infuriated slaves

went on from plantation to plantation, gathering strength in every step, and leaving not a living white behind. They passed the day till late in the afternoon, in this work of carnage, and between sixty and seventy individuals fell the victims of their rage. The population in this county is not dense, and rapidly as the alarm spread, it was impossible for some time to collect in sufficient numbers to make any defence. Every family was entirely at the mercy of its own slaves. It is impossible to conceive of more distressing circumstances of apprehension. It was said that most of the slaves belonged to kind and indulgent masters, and consequently no one felt secure. Late in the afternoon a small party of whites well armed collected at a plantation for defence. The slaves came on in large numbers, and emboldened by success, they at first drove back the whites. The slaves pressed on, thirsting for blood and shouting with triumphant fury, as the whites slowly retreated, to be butchered with their wives and their children. Just at this awful moment, a small reinforcement arrived, which turned the tide of victory, and dispersed the slaves.

Exhausted with the horrible labours of the day, the insurgents retired to the woods and marshes to pass the night. Early the next morning they commenced their work again. But the first plantation they attacked, they were driven from by the slaves of the plantation. These rallied around their master, and most fearlessly hazarded their own lives in his defence. By this time a sufficient force of the whites were collected to prevent their further pro-

gress. The fugitives were scattered over the country in small parties, but every point was defended, and wherever they appeared, they were routed. Many were shot, others taken prisoners, and the insurrection quelled. The leader, Nat Turner, for a few weeks succeeded in concealing himself, but at length was taken, and suffered the penalty of the law.

The following letter gives an account of the panic which was produced by this insurrection. It affords a most vivid and affecting description of the state of society in the south, and shews that where there is oppression, the providence of God so orders it, that sorrows shall fall upon the oppressors as well as on the oppressed.

Copy of a letter addressed to ———, by a gentleman in Charlestown, S. C——, a traveller from New England.

'*Charlestown, Dec.* 6, 1831.

'RESPECTED SIR,

'Some months ago, when I was enjoying the pleasure of your company and conversation, in the western part of Massachusetts, you expressed a very kind interest in my proceedings, and desired me to communicate to you any interesting intelligence that might come in my way. I once began a letter and made some progress in it, but it remained unfinished till it was quite out of date. Occasionally, since, I have been present in interesting scenes, or have met with pleasing incidents,

which have reminded me of your request: but mingled feelings of mental and bodily depression, have always deterred me from the undertaking.

'For the last six or eight weeks, however, I have been an observer of so many scenes of most painful interest, and of *one general character*, that I have long been resolving to improve my first respite from debility by making them the subject of communication to some of my friends at the north.

'When I left Boston in August I went out from my own home, not knowing hardly whither I went, excepting that I intended to spend the remainder of the warm weather at the Virginia Springs. But whither from them I might be led, I knew not. I there met and formed an acquaintance with a very kind friend. As the watering-season was about to close, with great kindness he invited me to accompany his family home, offering me a seat in his carriage, or on his saddle, as might be most agreeable to my health and enjoyment. Thus has my kind and Heavenly Father provided for me, and has led me by this journey through scenes of excitement and suffering, which have made me feel in a manner I never did before, the unhappy and deplorable state of society in this southern country. While my travels, thus far, have been made in circumstances most favourable to the improvement of my health, they have also been perhaps, as well calculated as they possibly could be, to give me a correct idea of the real state of things before and since the sad tragedy at Southampton. And I have

supposed that one reason why my steps have been thus directed, may have been to correct my impressions, and increase my information on this great subject, in order that I may be useful to our friends, in our own section of the country, or to our suffering fellow-citizens in this. For it seems to me that affairs are now in such a crisis, that this business of slavery must inevitably soon become one of overwhelming interest to the whole community, north, south, east, and west.

'The course of our journey was up the valley of Virginia, between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghany, through a section of East Tennessee, the upper part of North and South Carolina, and thence through Columbia to Charlestown.

'It so happened that in commencing our journey, we fell into the first wave of excitement and alarm, that spread from Southampton over the whole southern country, and we were borne upon it almost the whole distance. I never have been witness before of any thing from which I could obtain for my own mind, or convey to another's, any suitable idea of *public terror and distress.* I have been as much at a loss to know *how* to write upon this subject, as I have been desirous of writing something.

'I have however, thought it would be best in this letter, to attempt to give you some description of my journey; thus the subject will be presented to your mind just as it came before my own, and you will be better able to judge whether the conclusions at which I have arrived are correct or erroneous; or rather it is my desire to state *facts,* and not

opinions; for it does appear to me, that any reasonable reflecting man, wherever he may have been born and educated, and whatever his prepossessions in respect to slavery may be, if he will bring his mind to an *impartial* consideration of the *real state of things as they now exist* in these States, will not only disapprove of the views, which some of our friends at the north who are real philanthrophists and benevolent Christians at heart, have taken of the subject, but will be grieved at the sentiments which some of our editors express, and the course of action which they encourage in their columns.

'You probably know that my first acquaintance with this subject (excepting from books and talk at home) commenced with a three months visit in Virginia last winter. I made it my object, then, to gain all the information I could, but it is a delicate subject to inquire about. Now and then one may meet a frank open-hearted man with whom he may converse point blank. But much must be learned, if learned at all, incidentally. Last winter my most valued knowledge came by *seeing* and *hearing* what I did not *seem* to notice.

'More recently the insurrection at the south has opened many eyes, and loosed many tongues. The subject has every where been one of all absorbing interest, and has been the general topic of conversation in almost all its bearings and relations.

'The occurrences at Southampton were known at the Springs some time before we left them. But they are so remote from any considerable village or settlement, and the number of blacks in

the mountains is so small, that there could be no occasion for alarm or fear at all there. Every successive mail, however, brought pain and distress to many visitors, and as many were assembled there from all parts of the State, those who resided in the neighbourhood of the troubles, or had friends there, were in constant anxiety and suffering. In some of the little cabins (or small one-story-houses, as we call them) there were aching hearts, through fear of a similar massacre at the Springs. There was, however, so little ground for apprehension there, that the fear was confined almost exclusively to the ladies.

'In some instances the rustling of the wind, or the crackling of the fire, was magnified by a frightened imagination, into the tramp of banditti, or the snapping of pistols. A cluster of houses would be aroused by the alarm of some timid female, and all the gentlemen to be spared from other cabins, gathered together to pacify and guard her. But, generally speaking, there was very little alarm at the Springs. The suffering there was mostly in anxiety and sympathy, on account of others at a distance.

'And we commenced our journey, not expecting to meet any thing like *alarm* or *fear*, for the universal opinion was that the proportion of slaves and free blacks in the mountainous parts was so small, that there could be no possible ground for any such anxiety. But when we had reached within a few miles of Fincastle, the first little village in the valley through which we were to pass, we were met

by the question, 'Have you seen General Nat?'—'He was along this road this morning, two men met him, but he got away.' The report spread like wild fire. No doubt he was trying to get into Ohio. He would stir up a trouble in that country, and burn and massacre Fincastle.

'The whole village was in alarm. A large patrole was organized to scour the streets from nightfall till break of day, while the villagers, men, women, and children, trembled on their pillows. One afternoon, a day or two after we left, a poor sick negro was lying in his hut, a few miles from the village. A man rode by, and heard the cry which the pain of a blister or some painful applications extorted from him. The traveller started his horse, upon the top of his speed, for Fincastle. It was the shout of the insurgents. They were coming on—he saw them, some fifty or a hundred, and all would be lost. The whole town was in arms. The women all collected in the largest and strongest houses to cry and scream together. Thus passed the night.

'It was necessary for me to go to Lynchburg, and I had to leave my friends for a few days, while they kindly remained for me at Botetourt Springs. I was hastening on in the stage, to seek letters, &c. there, while they would get only a day or two's journey before I should overtake them. When within about ten miles of Lynchburg, we stopped for the relay of horses. I stepped into the house to warm me, when I found every thing in apparent disorder, and every countenance indicating fatigue

and mental suffering. The good woman received me at once with the greatest kindness. She apologized for the appearance of her rooms, saying, that they had all been in such a state for the last twenty-four hours, that they had hardly thought about their houses, or their meals even. They had been trying to save their lives. It appeared that a report had reached them, stating, that the slaves in Halifax county had risen, and completely triumphed over all the white force that could be brought against them: That about 1500 of them were marching in a body for Lynchburg, butchering men, women, and children, as they went: That Lynchburg had despatched as large a military body, as their own safety would allow them to spare, for the relief of their neighbours in Halifax: That Lynchburg was in a dreadful state of excitement—the whole town in perfect confusion: That the neighbours in the vicinity where she lived had deserted their dwellings, and clustered together, in a large brick house of one of their number, to pass the night if possible in safety. There was no such thing as sleeping, and some of the females were almost crazed with terror. The looks of the young ladies and children around her room, told well that her tale was true.

'Of course I anxiously looked for our arrival at Lynchburg, and on entering the town, found the troops parading the streets, and every thing confirming the impression which I had received, that the whole population had been in a state of most distressing alarm. I do not think it possible for me

to convey an adequate idea of the dreadful fear which agitated this village. Men, women, and children, *whites* and *blacks*, (slaves and free) were alike sufferers, though from different causes. I must try, however, to describe as well as I can, the state of things in this place for about a week. I arrived at Lynchburg on the first or second day after the alarm, and it was a peculiar providence, very unexpected and disappointing to me, which detained me there *four* days longer than I had intended to remain. I think I have already seen *good* which has resulted to me from the disappointment, but it occurs to me as I stopped my pen to consider whether I should describe particularly my visit here, that *another reason* for it now appears,—that I might see and know what I shall now endeavour to relate to you.

'In the first place Lynchburg, is next to Petersburg, I suppose the most important inland town in the State. It contains, I think, about 2000 inhabitants; I do not know in what proportion of white and black. I arrived there on Thursday afternoon, intending to spend the Sabbath, and leave in the Monday morning stage at four o'clock, but was detained till the following Thursday. Mr. and Mrs. B—— a good brother and sister of the Methodist church, whom I had met at the Springs, and who formed a most lovely part of a little circle of those who loved the Saviour there, had given me a very cordial invitation to come directly to their house, and make it my home while I was a visitor in L. I received as warm a welcome as one Christian

could give another, through them and their most excellent pastor, the Rev. Mr. P. whose acquaintance and society I had enjoyed at Saratoga; I was introduced a little into their circle of society.

'The following is the substance of a conversation held with a lady in that place. 'Well, Mr. B. if it were not for my husband, I would not stay here another day. But he says his business keeps him here. I would be willing to go and leave every cent of property, to get somewhere else. It is such a way to bring up my children. Why, if you have slaves, you must make them do all the work. If you suffer children to do any thing, it spoils them both. And if the children grow up in idleness, why you know they are never good for any thing. But as long as you have slaves, you must make them do the work—there is no other way. And when the night comes, to see my husband, when we retire, get up and take down the gun, pull off the case, see to the flint, and set it at the side of his bed,—it makes my heart ache! Mr. B. what would you do in case you were attacked?"

'"I hardly know, Mrs. A. I have tried to ascertain what my duty would be, that I might be prepared to act in an emergency, and not have to hesitate and deliberate when the time for action came."

'Mrs. A. "What do you *think* you should do?"

'"If I had presence of mind enough to act according to my convictions, it is my impression that I should not use violence."

'This conversation was entirely unexpected to

me, and I endeavoured for obvious reasons to avoid it. I saw by Mrs. A.'s countenance, that it was a very serious subject to her, and I turned to her minister, the Rev. Mr. P. who was present, (who had been educated at West-point, and became pious under the ministry there of the Rev. Mr. Mc. Ilvaine,) and tried to turn the conversation pleasantly away, for it was drawing to a difficult and delicate point, and one which I did not wish to discuss with those whose nightly preparation for self-defence was different from what I should feel at liberty to make. "Brother P." said I, "don't they call for your military skill in these times? I did not know but that I should find you at the head of the troops."

'Mrs. A. however, (after a few remarks between us, in which he pleasantly alluded to his life as a cadet,) urged the point again from which I wished to divert her. She called upon me in such a way, that I felt it to be my duty to give her an explicit answer; yet as I did not know how brother P. felt, I tried to guard my expressions, and replied, that so far as I understood the gospel, I could not find in the precepts of our Saviour, or in his example, or in that of any of his Apostles, sufficient warrant to allow me, in any circumstances, (if I could act while self-possessed,) to take away life. And I was, I assure you, *rejoiced*, and *comforted*, and *strengthened* to find that my good brother P. felt just as I did, a soldier notwithstanding. Mrs. A. seemed a little agitated at what her pastor said, and looking earnestly at him, and then at one or two

sleeping children, asked, "Why, brother P. do you think it can be my duty to see my children butchered, and tortured, and not defend their lives by the sacrifice of my own, or any other?" Brother P. gently intimated, that she could look to a safer teacher of duty than to her infant in the cradle, and she replied with earnestness, and in a lower tone of voice, "Brother P. I want to ask you, if you could stand here and look on, and see my children killed, and not *help me* defend them." "That is not the question," he answered gently. "The way to decide it is, what does the Lord Jesus Christ say." "Well," she continued, "I cannot believe that it *can be* our duty to stand still, and see our families massacred, and not defend ourselves." "Perhaps," added brother P. "it is *not* your *duty* to stay here, but to get up out of this land of abomination." I do not know but Providence intends to shew us, that we ought to go away. The thought came into my mind, that many families, and those of course of the most devoted Christians, might be induced by existing circumstances, to go into the western valley, driven by afflictive providences at home, to go forth as *missionary families* to places less favoured with the ordinances and influence of the gospel.

'Mr. ——, one of the most active and useful elders in the second Presbyterian church, is a man, in my estimation, of most excellent spirit. He is one of those active and efficient laymen, whose hearts and hands are in every good work. One evening we had a conversation on this subject, introduced by himself. He feels the evil of slavery,

is willing to do any thing in his power to alleviate or remove it. Some of his slaves, at his own expense, have been sent to Liberia. Others are not willing to go. He cannot free them, he cannot liberate them, and allow them to remain in the state. Many of his friends are in the same situation. They cannot send them to Liberia against their will—they cannot be set free at home. Shall they sell them for the New Orleans market, when the slaves beg and intreat that they may not be sent there. Having given this view of his situation, he reads an extract in a northern paper, the spirit of which is. "General Nat is a benefactor of his race. The Southampton massacre is an auspicious era for the African;" (I hope and believe that it is, for God will over-rule it) "that the blood of the sixty men, women, and children, shed by the sword and the axe in the hand of the negro, is a just return for the drops which have followed the master's lash." "Now," says he, "this grieves me. I know that all our brethren at the north, do not feel just as that article would represent them. But this is a religious paper, which many of us love. Our neighbours, however, who are men of the world, say to us, "*there* is your religion, your northern religion, sending papers out among us, to excite our slaves to rise upon us at midnight, and butcher us all." We cannot take such a paper, it is not safe. People around us, our citizens will not tolerate it. Now there were about a dozen of us who took this paper, and this article has set the whole town against it, and as religion has to bear it all, we wrote a calm

and christian letter to the editor, and told him, that we could not receive his paper, in safety to our wives and children, if he published such sentiments. Servants in the family get hold of them, and in most of the religious families, they are taught more or less to read the Bible, and of course can read other things."

'A lady gave me this account of Lynchburg, at the time the alarm reached them. There was a general rush of the inhabitants to the Court-house, which is in all the southern country the rallying point of the village. Men, women, and children of all classes, sick and well, shut themselves up, while the stronger, who have arms, sat around them for defence. You can imagine, better than I can describe, what a night of sleeplessness and terror, such a population must have passed. The shrieks, and cries, and prayers, of the terrified women and children, will not soon be forgotten there. The cessation of all business, the seizing and examining of suspected slaves, the noise of military movements, the distress of families, whom sickness and peculiar circumstances prevented from gathering with the multitude at the Court-house,—the terror which alarmed the blacks equally with the whites; for in case the town was attacked, they knew that the first step towards self-defence which the whites must take, would be to put *all the slaves* to death. All these things, and innumerable others, concur in making the day of the alarm at Lynchburg, to be remembered as long as the massacre which gave rise to it. I cannot describe even the impression made

on my mind at hearing what I did. It is impossible. It is more than two months ago, and much has been forgotten, but the impression *remains*.

'Mrs. —— and Mrs. —— and Mrs. —— are ladies, whose lives were nearly worn away, after days, and nights, and weeks of sleeplessness and fear.

'Miss —— and Miss —— are ladies, who are probably still sick from the effects of agitation and fear. Could I only send the miniature of the anxious faces of the many trembling females whom I saw, I believe that there are many of their New England sisters, whose hearts and hands would be wide open to aid in sending those to Liberia, who *are* willing to go.

'I have tried to give you some idea of Lynchburg, but I know it is faint. This, however, is just what was witnessed and suffered in almost every village through which we passed from Lynchburg, to Charleston. Sometimes we were in the midst of the alarm, sometimes one night before or behind it. Once our party thought it advisable to go a little out of our course, to avoid spending the night in Jonesboro', Tenessee, because the night before the whole place was in most violent agitation from this cause. About twenty negroes have been imprisoned, three had been shot, not fatally, however, in the effort to arrest them. Of course, I had nothing to do or say in any such arrangements. They consulted with me in making the change in our course, and it was easy to see their apprehensions, while nothing was lisped by any one to let their families know

why the change was made. And probably to this day they do not know all the reasons that occasioned it. But it was most deeply and painfully interesting to see how studiously it appeared in the conduct of Mr. —— and Mr. ——, that the husband and father were unwilling to agitate the feelings of those whose fear could only be suppressed by ignorance: and yet how soon the ladies would ascertain from the ladies at the inns, how each village was alarmed. Thus husband and wife were silent together, while each were aware of facts which they well knew would alarm the other. I, being a kind of neutral, was in some things a confidant on both sides, and saw not a little of this, and I could but know, that as I was a Northerner, probably much was concealed from me.

'At Greenville, N. C. the scene of Lynchburg was acted again, in, if possible, aggravated circumstances. Many persons in the outskirts of the village, hearing of the alarm which was spreading around them, started at night with their families, and whatever of their valuables they could take in the carriage, to ride all night to some place of safety.

'One lady, whose name was given to me, in the presence of her minister, called her servants into the parlour, and in spite of all the expostulations of her pastor, fell upon her knees before them, and begged them to defend her life. She could not be pacified until the Rev. gentleman was placed as the footman on the carriage, with a drawn sword in his hand, while her most trusty servants drove them,

with all possible speed, almost all night long, to a place of safety. It was all a false alarm, and indeed every one, *without exception, that I heard of, was unfounded.* In one case a whole county was thrown into confusion by a man's hearing the discharge of musketry on a review day, and consequently, spurring his horse to the utmost, carried the report that the negroes had risen. It was soon spreading like wild-fire over the country. Every one added a little, until it was magnified into a story too absurd and ridiculous, and some one discovered the cause.

'Mr. —— at C. is one of the most devoted and active Christians I have met with on my journey. By his kind invitation I spent a week in his family. I had no letter of introduction, but called on him, because a good friend of his and mine, whom I had met in Virginia, had said, "Go and call on him, and say Mr. A. told you to call." He received me as a brother, and all his family. One day he told me at the breakfast table, "One morning, Mr. B. after the great alarm in this place, I called my servants up while we were all at breakfast, and told them the real state of things;—what the servants had done at Southampton, and what Dr. B.'s servants had done in defending their master. I then said, "Now John," (his principal servant, and a very smart young man,) "suppose the blacks should rise, would you defend us, or join them?" John hesitated a moment, and then replied, "I think I should join them." Mr. —— I suppose was one of the best of masters, and did a great deal to

promote the temporal and future happiness of his servants, and all the family had felt unlimited confidence in John and the others. But after this, not one of the family could ever feel easy while Mr. —— was out. At night, if one went to meeting, all must go. None dared to stay at home.

'Dec. 24. I am afraid I have spun out my letter to a tiresome length. I have still in mind many a story which goes to show, and that most forcibly, that the situation of our southern friends, is one which *demands our sympathies*, not our reproaches. It seems to me that I could fill sheet after sheet with similar anecdotes, but I am afraid that I have told too many now; yet I have chosen this way of writing, because I could, with more freedom and less mental effort, relate what I have seen and heard. I hesitated not a little, about attempting a series of anonymous letters to some editor, or to the Secretary of the Boston Debating Society, when I saw announced as a subject of discussion before it, "Ought measures to be adopted to prevent the publication of papers and pamphlets, having a tendency to excite insurrection among the slaves of the south?" But I felt rather less restraint in writing for the eye of a friend, than for public service. I wish to make this impression, that our friends here are grievously afflicted, and that we ought to sympathize with them, and to be ready to bear a fraternal part in endeavouring to alleviate and remove their burdens.

'I am not insensible that there are a class of persons here, who have no claim to our sympathy

or our aid. But I hope in some future communication, to speak on that subject, so as to give a view of the different classes of slave-holders, into which it seems to me the community may be divided. Suffice it to say now, that there are suffering Christians here, and if we have a common High Priest in heaven, whose heart can be touched with the infirmities *of all of us*, we ought to feel for them.

'When we consider the situation of those in fear of whom they stand; that they are not a foreign foe coming in array, whom they can meet and resist, but a scattered and insidious enemy, around every dwelling, at every fire-side, and as it were in every chamber, night and day, it does seem to me that we ought not to be silent, when others try to rouse the assassin, and sharpen his sword. My views of slavery as a moral, civil, and political evil, are not changed, unless it be to a conviction that it is a greater evil than I had ever supposed. But that the present generation of slave-holders are guilty in being owners of slaves, I cannot believe, except so far as they are guilty in not having been more active in endeavouring to enlighten, improve, and to free them. But here an infant comes into the world and is a slave-holder in the cradle, and unless he has the disposition to sell them to a cruel slave dealer, who traffics in flesh, and blood, and lashes, or has the ability to send his servants to Liberia, he must be a slave-holder till he enter his grave. I know of many cases that illustrate this, but I must close. I have enjoyed the privilege of occupying the chamber from which the spirit of the beloved Evarts took

its flight. Not a little of this communication has been penned at the table standing near his bed-side. At midnight, on the pillow where he reclined his head, I have thought of his departure, and have looked upward for large measures of that spirit which actuated him. Had he left his mantle there, I would have borne it away. There is much interest in this city and vicinity in the progress of religion. Several most powerful revivals have occurred in neighbouring places, which have almost electrified the community, political as well as religious.

'At Walteboro' many of the most violent leaders in the recent political excitement have been changed from the lion to the lamb. One of their number recently said, he was all for "*submission*" now, to Christ. Another in the fulness of his heart said, he could fall upon his knees, and kiss the dust on the feet of the opposite party, if they would only come to Christ. The Rev. Mr. B. has recently come to Charleston. A protracted meeting has been in progress here, about a week, in Dr. Mc. Dowell's Society. Christians are much encouraged in the hope, that there is to be a great work here.

'Measures, however, have not yet reached a crisis. There is good prospect of a season of much good, if one can decide from some indications. With my best regards for Mrs. —— and family, for I suppose E. J. and some of the others may remember me,

'I am, your's very respectfully.

—— ——

(There were appended to the above letter the following documents.)

Copy of a letter addressed 'Telescope, Columbia, S. C.' Enclosed in an envelope, containing a number of the Worcester Spy.

'*Boston, Oct.* 13, 1831.

'SIR,

'I have seen in one of our city papers, a paragraph attributed to the Telescope, which seems to menace the men *of the North* with some undefined penalty, if they venture to go a step in any thing relating to the South, beyond certain well-defined objects. It would be satisfactory to us, as it is, perhaps, necessary to our safety, if you would tell us what those objects are, and what you will and will not deem 'impertinent interference.' We are so much accustomed to southern blustering and bullying, and so heartily despise it, that we cannot be expected to yield to that alone. To reason, however, we profess allegiance, and will submit to her authority, even when it is in favour of the enemies of liberty, the enemies of New England, and the allies of Austria, Spain, the Holy Alliance, and the Holy Inquisition. There never has been in the annals of despotism so disgraceful and foul a page, as the Laws of the Slave States, for restraining, punishing, torturing, and I might say, murdering a portion of their fellow beings. Those States fight against God and the light of the age. God will raise up an avenging hand, which will execute his dreadful

judgments upon them. Depend upon it, the safest course which citizens of the south can adopt, is to devise and pursue sincere and energetic measures to abolish entirely the curse of slavery, and appease the wrath of heaven, before it bursts upon them. If, however, through the suggestions of avarice, ambition, and luxury, they are dissuaded from taking this wise and just course, the next best thing they can do, will be to remain as quiet as possible. The most that they can expect in this enlightened age is to be tolerated, and go with impunity. Their greatest blessing is to be forgotten, and become a Terra Incognita in the moral world. They stand *in their own wrong*, before heaven and the present generation, and for their own safety they ought to be quiet as thieves in a house which the police are searching.

Signed, SKRZYNECKI,
LA FAYETTE,
KOSCIUSKO,
WASHINGTON.'

Copy of a circular addressed to the Postmaster, Countsville, Lexington Co. S. C. (near Columbia.)

[*Albany,*] *Sept.* 14, [1831.]

[SIR,

'As our Constitution says, that all men are created equal, and as God has made of one flesh all the nations of the earth, and as the negroes are no worse when born than the whites, and as there is no good prospect that a voluntary release of the slaves

will be effected to any great degree, I hereby make known that for these and other reasons, I will, as an individual, use all honourable means to sever the iron bond that unites slaves to their masters; and so long as this national ulcer, Slavery, remains upon a part of the public, a disunion is highly desirable. It is a disgrace to the United States. It is looked upon as such by the most of Europe. What! a republic boasting its equal rights, when a worse system of slavery is hardly, if at all, to be found. It is a shame.]

'Your's respectfully,

—— ——.'

'That part of the above which is inclosed in brackets, was in type. The rest added with a pen.

'I have only to say respecting these two documents, that when I was in Columbia, there was a short paragraph in one of the papers there, announcing the reception of two communications from the North, on the subject of Slavery; but of an improper character to be inserted in their columns. I called at the office of the editor of the Telescope, and asked permission to see some of his exchange papers from the North. After reading for a time, I made a remark, as it were incidentally respecting the paragraph I have alluded to, hoping that he might be disposed in reply to shew me the communications. He did so, and I asked permission to copy them, intending to forward them to my friends in the North, that they might see what some among us were doing, to irritate the feelings of our

southern friends. Who knows but they who have sent the two communications I have copied, are also sending similar things all through the south.

'The Telescope is a low paper, the tool of Dr. C——, and is not at all entitled to respect; yet its influence on this subject, as that of every paper must be, is great. A little incident in connexion with the above, may, perhaps, interest you a little, as it shews the great sensitiveness whenever this subject is touched. When I copied these papers, I said nothing to the editor about the object in requesting permission to do so, for I wished not to be known at all in any thing I might do on this subject, and did not even let him know my name.

'Soon after, two gentlemen called at the hotel, where I was staying, and inquired about a suspicious looking character who had been reading the newspapers, and copying articles on Slavery in the Telescope office. I do not know what the consequences might have been, had not my good friend Mr. —— happened providentially to have been at the door at the time they stepped in, and overhearing the conversation, said at once, that he knew who it was, and would answer for me, that I was not a circulator of seditious pamphlets. Had I not had friends there, or had before this call, religious conversation with mine host, who was a pious man, I might have had the pleasure of appearing before Court, and answering for myself. As it was, however, I once had occasion after this to go out of an evening a short distance, and a good man, a disciple who had given me a home in his prophet's chamber,

insisted upon accompanying me back, lest I should meet with something unpleasant. Large rewards are offered publicly and privately for the apprehension of any one in any way concerned in the circulation of papers or pamphlets of a dangerous tendency.

'There is a reward of 3,000 dollars for the person of a certain man at the North, whose efforts are well-known, in pushing immediate and universal emancipation at all hazards.

'I want, if I have time, to take up the question of *immediate emancipation*, and make it a subject of communication. I should like to present a few considerations on the present state of both colours here, and the consequences of such a measure to both classes. And it does appear to me, that an enlightened and candid mind, uninfluenced by long and enthusiastic devotion to a favourite object, must admit that of all the steps that could be taken to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, immediate and indiscriminate emancipation is one of the last to be desired. I suppose that some would think, that I too had become reconciled to slavery, from having been a few months a resident where I could have a slave to run at my bidding. They are ready to think so of a northerner, whose views are modified by being an eye-witness of the state of things. But if I know my heart, my dislike and aversion to this constitution of society, is deeper—*far deeper* than ever. "No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's just estimation prized above all price, I had much rather be myself the slave, and wear the bonds, than fasten them on him."'

CHAPTER VII.

HOLIDAYS.

Thanksgiving.—A custom has been transmitted to us from our Puritan fathers, of setting apart a day at the close of the harvest, for thanksgiving and praise. It was intended as a purely religious festival, and was most sacredly and solemnly observed. In modern times, it has lost a little of the solemnity with which it was regarded by our ancestors, and has assumed a more social, and, I fear, gay and thoughtless aspect. Still the day is generally observed with much propriety.

Late in the autumn, when all the fruits of the field have been gathered in, the Governor of the State, with the advice of his council, issues a proclamation, *recommending* to the inhabitants the observance of a stated day for thanksgiving and praise to God for the blessings of the season. The day appointed is generally about the middle of November. The week before its arrival, all the families of the State commence preparations for thanksgiving feast. The art of cookery is tasked to its utmost. The oven groans with puddings and with pies, and excepting in the poultry-yard,

there is universal glee. One would think that every family were preparing a feast for an army. I well recollect the principal drawback on my youthful pleasures in this jocund season, was the quantity of oven wood I was under the necessity of splitting. But when I saw batch after batch of smoking pies issuing from the oven; the huge milk-pans, filled with the rich combination of stewed pumpkins and milk; and the mountainous plum-pudding, filled with the swollen raisins, more precious than pearls and diamonds, I could not refrain from rubbing my hands with extacy. I felt a kind of nervous delight, thrilling through my frame, as I gazed into the glowing oven, with its circling eddies of flame and smoke, and then looked upon the white kitchen table, ornamented with its treasures of paste, and most charmingly variegated with tarts and sweets, and every imaginable good thing that could steal the heart of the ruddy boy. I was then too young to care for men or measures, but in my heart, I blessed him who invented the 'Thanksgiving.'

It is customary, upon these occasions, for those who are in comfortable circumstances, to remember the poor. Those who are unable to provide a thanksgiving feast for themselves, receive supplies from the benevolence of their neighbours. And I used to feel a kind of gratified pride, as my mother stowed in the basket the little package of tea, with the pies and other little comforts which I was to carry to the lonely widow, or to the hungry family in the neighbourhood. The preparation for the feast at home, made me a very important personage,

and as I was running upon errands to the neighbouring stores—here to get a few raisins, and there to get some currants: here for a little sugar, and there for a little spice: to this shop for some eggs, and to that for some cyder,—I felt as elated, as ever did a military officer, in galloping over a field of review. My imagination was busy in anticipating the result of all these labours, and the bustle of preparation, invested the event with an importance bordering on the sublime.

At length the happy morning is ushered in. It will not do to mar the appetite for the dinner, by indulging in a bountiful breakfast. The morning repast is frugal, and yet the appetite is excited by some little foretaste of what is to come. The stores are all closed, and the general appearance of the city and of the village, is nearly that of the Sabbath. In the distant fields, not a few are found, who desecrate the day by entire devotion to amusements. The Bowling Alley is thronged by dissolute loungers. The idle and the dissipated congregate for field sports and shooting-matches, and pass the day in deeds of cruelty and sin. But the more orderly and reputable part of the community remain at their homes, endeavouring to improve the hours in sincere and heartfelt thanksgiving to their Maker.

At eleven o'clock, the bell rings for public worship. The people then, in accordance with the recommendation of the Governor and his council, assemble in their churches. By much previous exercise, the choir are generally prepared with the best music they are able to furnish. The officiating

clergyman generally takes this opportunity to present some topic of a national character, and to enforce upon his congregation, attention to their political duties. Those subjects which he would hardly feel at liberty to discuss in the pulpit on the Sabbath, he avails himself of this opportunity to present.

About one o'clock, the congregations are seen leaving the churches, and repairing to their homes, to meet around the festal board. The son who is absent at the school, or the college, or the store, comes home to pass 'thanksgiving-day' with his parents. The daughter who is married and has removed from town, returns with her husband and her little ones, to sit down once more at her father's table. Relatives and friends endeavour on that day to meet, and renew past friendships, and tell their tales of weal and woe. The silent tear is not unfrequently seen in the eye, as memory points to one, who a year before was seated at the table, and enjoying the precious interview, but who now is among the dead. It is a kind of record day, in which the past is reviewed, and in which the heart is refreshed by new tokens of friendship. Assembled at the table, and partaking of its bountiful provision, the heart of the worldly man is elated with pleasure, and that of the Christian glows with gratitude and praise. The one makes it the occasion merely of rejoicing: the other of thanksgiving. The one, perhaps, sits down at the table and rises from it without any expression of gratitude to his Maker; the other offers to God, the incense of a grateful heart.

At the close of the dinner, the formal religionist, who thinks he has done his duty by attending church, goes out to find amusement in riding or walking. The Christian, mindful of the object of the day, assembles in the parlour the circle of domestics and friends for exercises of devotion. Their hearts unite in prayer, and their voices mingle in the sweet cadences of the thanksgiving hymn. As the sun goes down, the evening prayer is offered, and grateful hearts beat happily in anticipation of an eternal meeting, and an eternal scene of thanksgiving in the heavenly world. The evening is passed by the older members of the family in conversation, and by the children in those animating sports which diffuse such joy around the evening fire-side. Such is a New England thanksgiving, perverted by many, but a blessing and a comfort to not a few.

Fast Day.—In the spring of the year, there is a day set apart by recommendation from the governor and council, for fasting, humiliation, and prayer. The dissipated and thoughtless make this a day of festivity. The serious resort to the church as on the Sabbath, and endeavour to humble themselves before God, and implore his blessing upon the labours of the husbandman, and the fruits of the season. I need not remark that it is not so popular a day as is thanksgiving. It is, however, generally observed with a good degree of propriety. Where it is with sincerity observed, it must prove at least an individual blessing; and he

who heareth the prayers of his people, has undoubtedly, in answer to these prayers, caused the sun to shine, and the rain to fall, even upon those who will not call upon his name, and who will not acknowledge their dependence upon his power. Still, there are not a few, who feel that not much is gained by even so remote a connexion between the church and state, as is implied in the appointment of these days. They would prefer that ecclesiastical bodies should be left to appoint their own seasons for penitence and for praise, hoping that thus the majesty of heaven would not be insulted by the extensive perversion of a day, professedly set apart for humiliation and prayer, to purposes of festivity and sin.

Fourth of July.—One of the most important gala days, not only in New England, but throughout the whole of the United States, is the anniversary of the national independence. The day is ushered in by the ringing of bells, and the firing of cannon. Long before the sun appears, the slumbers of the morning are disturbed by the deafening peals of the one, and the multitudinous din of the other. Boys in vagrant troops, wander through the streets, firing their mimic guns and exploding crackers, and if so fortunate as to get a drum, or a good sounding tin pail, the morning air rings with their martial strains. From the time that the first gray tints of the morning streak the eastern sky, nothing is heard but noise and confusion. One man, to express his joy, is pulling a bell-rope;

another is driving home the cannon's charge, endeavouring to manifest his triumphant feelings by the loudness of the report. There is a portion of every community who have but little respect for themselves, and who are not troubled with the respect of others. These every where, and under all circumstances, think happiness consists in making loud noises. Their screams are heard in the midnight orgies of the grog-shop. Their huzzas are heard in the streets, and they are the men who pull bell-ropes, and fire off cannons, because they are glad, or want to be.

The more orderly part of the community endure as patiently as possible, this heathenish uproar. After the sun rises, there is a little respite from noise, but a gathering confusion of the multitude in the streets. As families gather around the breakfast table, they come prepared for the tale of accidents that have occurred.

'Pa,' says a little boy, who has ventured out into the yard, to see the strange things which are going on, 'Mr. Bent was firing a gun this morning, and it split and tore his face all to pieces, and a man who went by just now, says the doctor thinks he cannot live through the day.'

'And upon the hill where they were firing the cannons, a man was ramming down the charge, and it exploded suddenly, and blew both his arms off.'

This is quite a moderate chapter of accidents, but similar events are interspersed through the scenes of the day. As the gun-firing, and bell-

ringing, and mob-shouting multitude become warm by exertion, and excited by rum, caution is forgotten, and calamities are multiplied.

As the breakfast hour passes away, the roll of the drum is heard upon the village common, or the place of rendezvous of the city, and the citizen soldiers in their volunteer uniform, are seen moving from different parts of the city or village to the place of parade. Men and boys are collecting, and waggon-loads of spectators, with waggon-loads of eatables are rapidly congregating. In the country village, not a few of the farmer's wives and daughters are found with their husbands or gallants, helping 'keep independence.' At times a liberty pole is erected, around which they rally and drink to the prosperity of their country, but to the ruin of themselves, their families, and their farms. Not a few of our enlightened statesmen have yet to learn that national prosperity is not to be promoted by individual dissipation and family woe: that love of country is to be promoted by filling the land with fertile farms and happy homes, and not by encouraging scenes of rioting and uproar.

The military company parades the streets; and the peaceful citizen, in the almost burlesque dress of war, treading to the measure and music of the drum and the fife, allures the inmates of every dwelling to the window, to admire his nodding plume and glittering sword. All the boys in the village flank the musicians, contemplating with wonder, the skill of the drummer, who is to them

the hero of the day. The sober citizen leads out his child to amuse him for a half hour with the glittering scene, and then returns to his home.

Eleven o'clock arrives. It is the hour for a 'Fourth of July Oration.' The bell rings. The multitude assemble to walk in procession to the meeting-house. The drum rolls more rapidly, and the fife speaks more merrily than ever, as the citizen soldiers, in double quick step, perform the duty of escort. Every muscle is in motion, and every heart beats quick, and every cheek smiles, as the animating strains of our national air come merrily from the band.

Good old 'Yankee Doodle' has come to be an indispensable accompaniment upon every occasion of public rejoicing. Its enlivening melody has an electric influence upon the crowd. Whenever and wherever it is heard, it is greeted with applause. And especially upon the anniversary of our national independence, it will dispel the most inveterate frown that ever became naturalized upon an American brow.

When the procession arrives at the meeting-house, it is found that the galleries and the side pews are already filled with females and children. All are soon seated. A prayer is offered by the clergyman of the village, who, by request, officiates as the chaplain of the day, and the lawyer or the physician, or more probably, some law-student of the place, entertains the audience with an hour's oration. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, no one is interested but the orator himself. The boys want

to be out at their sports; the soldiers are impatient to continue their display; the lover of a good dinner is thinking of the roast beef and plum-pudding, which are in a state of preparation at the adjacent tavern; and of the wine, which flows freely as water, when the cloth is removed. The ladies did not come to hear, but to see. And the few, who, from a sense of propriety, endeavour to put on at least the semblance of attention, take it for granted that nothing new can be said in a 'Fourth of July Oration,' but that patriotism demands of them patiently and meekly to submit to the infliction.

At length the weary hour has gone, for even a 'Fourth of July' oration, cannot compel time entirely to stop, though apparently, it clogs her wheels. The drum and the fife again are heard, as though rejoicing at their relief from compulsory silence. The multitude crowd from the house with the avidity of school-boys at the close of a weary summer's afternoon. The village paper at its next appearance, gives a brief notice of the thrilling eloquence of the orator, and of the enchained attention of the audience. From the meeting-house, the wives and the children go home to their solitary meals, while the husbands and the elder sons resort to the public dinner-table at the neighbouring tavern.

The dinner-hour passes, as all such scenes have passed from the beginning, with but little of comfort, and still less of enjoyment. The cloth is removed. The wine glitters in the decanters, and a gentleman rises at one part of the table to read some long

toasts, which have previously been prepared. Then comes the applause.

But I will not enter into the philosophy of modern plaudits. All my readers know that they consist of a combination of every heathenish noise. Many of my readers will consider me an old-fashioned sort of personage for declaring that I never could find any delight in kicking the floor, pounding the table, and shouting 'hurrah.' So I must even leave the gentlemen to their own enjoyment, at the dinner table, and simply announce that the toasts and the speeches are received with much *applause.*

Thus passes a few hours of this sort of enjoyment. Bye and bye a toast is given, complimenting some distinguished guest who is present. This calls him upon his feet and elicits a speech. At the close of each eloquent passage, there follows a round of impressive plaudits. The company on such occasions, is generally very respectable, and all these congratulatory noises are conducted after certain established rules of order and propriety. As the afternoon wears away, and the evening approaches, the more respectable and orderly part of the company retire from the table to their houses. A few dissipated loungers remain to drain the bottles, and to swell the tide of excitement to a more frantic flow. The number of these, however, is now comparatively small—far less than a few years since. The temperance societies have banished very generally from the table, the more deleterious combinations of alchoholic poison, and there are

now but few so far lost to themselves, as to become mere swinish revellers after the company have retired.

Still there are invariably a few stragglers, who linger around the tavern, and the bar-room is filled during the evening, by those who are preparing to fill their homes that night with weeping and woe. The anxious mother trembles at the return of the father, and hastens her frightened children to bed, that she alone may meet and hear his brutality.

As the sun goes down, the pealing din of the bell and the roaring of the cannon are again heard. As the darkness of the night comes on, crackers, and squibs, and other fire-works, are sent up to illumine the evening sky. The sharp report of the soldiers' gun is heard, as here and there he discharges his piece on his way to his home. And the quiet family that surrounds the evening table, rejoicing that the day is over, shudder as they hear the rattling of the waggon wheels, with the horse urged to a full gallop by the loud shouts of half-intoxicated men. The happy mother clasps her infant to her heart, and weeps to think of the worse than widowed mother, who, defenceless herself, and with her defenceless babes, must meet and endure the senseless rage of a drunken husband.

Such has been generally, and such now is, in many cases, the commemoration of the anniversary of our national independence. There is something very animating in the poetic description of ushering in the glories of the day by the pealing of bells, and the roar of the cannon, and the huzzas of a

free and rejoicing people. But there is something exceedingly prosaic in the fact of pulling a bell-rope, and screaming and pounding upon a table, and kicking a floor. I know of nothing in the world more foreign from true happiness or real rejoicing. It sounds well to talk of thus promoting the love of country, and animating the bosom with patriotic pride. But that man will love his country the best who has the happiest home in it; and his bosom will swell with the purest emotions of patriotism, who looks upon a confiding wife and promising children, and who is animated to industry by success. The ringing of the bell and the explosion of powder do not make patriots.

There is in this land much love of country. There are no people on the face of the globe more attached to their institutions, or more proud of their name than are the Americans. Great as are our national sins, and numerous as are our faults, we feel that there is not the nation under heaven that can cast at us the first stone. There is not an American to be found, who will not apply to himself the language of England's favourite poet and her own—

'*America*, with all thy faults, I love thee still.'

It is not our intention to give an eulogy or a satire, but a description, vivid, if possible, but faithful and true. And we rejoice that the influence of such scenes as we have been describing is not that of unmixed evil. There is occasionally an address delivered, which communicates to the public mind

valuable information, and which reminds the people of the blessings they are enjoying. There is perhaps something gained by the promiscuous intercourse of all the citizens, of whatever rank in life, at the public table.

There are frequently religious celebrations, in which Christian influence is exerted, to direct public attention to the subject of slavery, or an effort is made to guide the affections to God, as the author of all the multiplied blessings we enjoy. Of late years, these celebrations have been growing more frequent, and the influence of them is felt, in stamping the ordinary celebrations with more propriety. We hope and pray that the time may soon come, when the morning of our national independence shall be ushered in with thanksgiving and praise; when our coloured brethren at the south shall be able to unite with a full chorus in the redemption song; and when the whole land shall echo with the adoration of a free, and an united, and a happy people. Then will the cup of the drunkard be broken, and the roar of the murderous cannon will be hushed for ever. Then shall the Fourth of July be the sabbath-day of freedom, and English and American hearts shall unite, to mourn over past strife, and to thank God for reconciliation and love.

CHAPTER VIII.

COLLEGE LIFE.

My dear Cousin,

I promised you that when I entered College, I would write and tell you all that I could about this new mode of life. My father came in the stage with me, from home to this place, that he might assist me in finding a boarding-house, and in furnishing my room. We arrived here on Monday evening, and called upon the President. He told us that the candidates for admission were to be examined in one of the lecture-rooms, the next morning, at half-past eight.

At that hour in the morning, I went to the lecture-room, and found about thirty there, standing about the door, waiting for the professors and tutors to come. They were all strangers to me. But I could see that nearly all felt as I did—that is, half frightened out of their wits. I assure you it is a pretty formidable thing, to be arranged before half-a-dozen professors and tutors, and in the presence of a class of thirty strangers, to be examined, hap-hazard, in the books required for admission. I dreamed of it all night, and could

not eat any breakfast in the morning, and when I arrived at the door, I saw that all the others were in nearly the same plight. Some were stepping around, trying to appear as careless and light-hearted as possible, but the pale cheek and the manifest effort, showed that they were endeavouring, as one of the older students said, to rally their retreating courage. The law of the college will not admit any under fifteen years of age. There were some, however, who looked younger than that, and there were several who were nearly thirty.

The examination was not so difficult as we feared. All were admitted, but a few were desired to review some of the studies with which they were not sufficiently familiar. There are two buildings occupied by the students. They are built of brick, four stories high, and each contains thirty-two rooms. But there are not enough to accommodate all the students, and many of our class are under the necessity of obtaining rooms in the houses of the village. The college rooms are about twenty feet square, and attached to each is a small bed-room, eight feet long, by six wide. Two students occupy a room. You perhaps know that there are four classes in college. The first year we are called Freshmen,—the second, Sophomores,—the third, Juniors, and the fourth, Seniors.

I have now been here a week, and will endeavour to describe the ordinary duties of each day. Any one day will afford a pretty fair specimen of all the rest. The first morning, I was very much afraid I should not awake in time to attend prayers.

This fear gave me a night of troubled dreams. I awoke two or three times before day, and looked at my watch by the bright rays of the moon, and felt so lonely, that I longed to be at home again.

At last, I rose and dressed me an hour before the prayer-bell rung. I lighted my candle, and sat down to look over my morning lesson, but I could not study, for the tears filled my eyes, as I thought of the home and the friends I had left. I was ashamed of my weakness, but I felt that I was out in the great world alone. I felt as I should think a ship-wrecked man would feel, clinging to some object in the midst of the ocean.

At last, the prayer-bell rung. It was just before sun-rise. The students began to pour out of the college doors, and flock into the chapel. My room-mate and I mingled in the crowd, and in the excitement of this new scene, I forgot, in some measure, my home-sickness. The devotional exercises lasted about fifteen minutes, and then we went to the recitation room. There are about forty in our class. The tutor calls upon one and another here and there, as he pleases, so that no one may know in what part of the lesson he is to be taken up. If any one is absent from his recitation without excuse, he is fined, the punishment consisting not so much in the amount of fine, which is trifling, as in the fact that it is charged to his father in his term-bill, and thus his delinquencies are made known to his friends.

Immediately after recitation, we returned to our rooms, and in a few minutes, the bell rung for breakfast. It was then about eight o'clock. As I

walked along through the college yard, the students were dispersing in every direction to their boarding-houses, scattered throughout the village. Now and then you would see some demure fellow, moping along alone, apparently unhappy, but generally they were social and merry, as though they knew not care. There are seven students who board in the same family with me. They are all about eighteen years of age, which is, perhaps, the average age of the students.

Immediately after breakfast, we returned again to our rooms. The students, for a few moments, clustered around the doors, talking with each other. A few were playing at ball in the yard, and one went round with a subscription paper, to raise money to purchase a couple of foot-balls. At nine o'clock the bell rang again for study hours, and we all hastened to our rooms. The laws of the college forbid any student to be out of his room in study hours, except for necessary purposes. There are, however, I believe, always some who neglect their studies, and evade the laws whenever they can. As I was looking out of the window during the forenoon, I saw two students, one of them with a gun in his hand, slily creeping towards the woods near the college. I suppose that every day there are more or less, who are roving through the woods, or sailing upon the neighbouring pond. At eleven o'clock, the bell rang for recitation, and the classes assembled again in their respective recitation rooms. We recited as in the morning, the tutor calling upon different members of the class to translate different

portions of the lesson. After recitation, the students employed themselves as they pleased till dinner time. Some went to their rooms to read, some to the woods to walk ; and many were engaged in playing ball in the yard. I joined the party who were swinging the bat-stick. At one o'clock the bell rang for dinner. At two o'clock we are again summoned by the bell to our rooms and our studies. But if you were passing by the college buildings at a quarter before two, you would have seen crowds of students around the doors, forming various plans for future enjoyment. The afternoon was passed by myself and room-mate in quiet study, and at half-past four, we were again called by the bell to recitation. At half-past five, the evening-prayer bell collected us in the chapel. Immediately after prayers, by the President, (for he usually officiates morning and evening) we went to our supper-tables, and at seven, the bell again reminded us, that we must turn from our evening walks and sports, to our studies, in preparation for the recitation of the morning. But the experience of one short week has taught me, that there are not a few, who take advantage of the darkness of the evening, to seek enjoyment in scenes of petty and contemptible mischief. And I have also learned that these individuals are the least respected in college, and are the most discontented and unhappy persons within the walls.

I cannot help giving you an account of one scene, which I very unexpectedly and unintentionally witnessed. It will afford a little insight into

some of the scenes of college life, to which I hope I shall not often be personally a witness. One day this week, one of the sophomore class, with whom I had become a little acquainted, came to me, and asked me if I would come into his room, that evening at eight o'clock, for they were to have a 'roast.' I did not know what he could mean by a roast, and was afraid to confess my ignorance, lest he should laugh at me for being *green*. So I accepted his invitation, supposing that I should soon learn by sight, what a 'roast' was. The student told me when I came, to give four raps with my cane, that they might know that I was one of the invited. About half-past eight in the evening I went to the room, and rapped as I was bidden. The signal was understood, and as the door was carefully opened, I was hastily drawn in; and I can assure you that I was not long in doubt as to what was meant by a 'roast,' for behold, in the middle of the room stood a table covered with plates, knives, forks, &c; and suspended by strings before a great fire, hung two chickens, which the occupant of the room was basting, as I believe they called it, when I entered. Beneath the chickens were placed two deep plates, to catch the gravy which was dripping from them. The occupants of the room had their coats off, and aprons on, and their sleeves tucked up like most accomplished cooks. One or two other students were performing the still more humble service of kitchen scullions; one was gathering up the feathers which were scattered about the room, and which they had been

picking from the fowls; another was rubbing the knives, while another was sweating over the fire, and watching the boiling of chocolate in a huge coffee-pot. When I saw what was going on, I wished myself away, but had not courage enough to incur the ridicule which I knew would be heaped upon me, if I should refuse to remain. In the course of conversation, I found that the students had *stolen* the chickens from a neighbouring hen-roost. They talked of it with perfect freedom, as if they were not conscious that there was any disgrace in stealing. I was so much surprised, that I knew not what to say: at last I ventured to suggest the inquiry, if it were really *honest* to *steal*. They stared at me, apparently in utter astonishment, and told me that if they had supposed that I was so green as that, they should not have invited me to their roast. I found that they did not consider it at all inconsistent with good moral conduct, to steal a man's potatoes, or corn, or apples, or to rob him of his turkeys or his chickens. And while doing this every week, they would have been exceedingly enraged if any one had intimated that they were thieves.

I recollected that one of our neighbours was sent to the house of correction for stealing some chickens; he was a poor man, and said he did it to feed his children, but he lost his character by it, and has been in disgrace ever since. I told them of this case, and asked them why it was not as bad for them to steal, as for this poor man. They seemed to be getting very much vexed, and said

that they did such things merely for fun. But I could not see why it was not worse for a man to steal, who had no motive but pleasure, than for one who really wanted food for his children. They, however, were getting so much excited, that I did not like to say much more about it.

I suppose this is what people mean by getting acquainted with the world, and learning human nature. At any rate, it is a new exhibition of human nature to me. I have thought much upon the subject since, and I cannot understand the matter to be anything less than stealing. I was not prepared to find such a state of morals in college. I would not have you infer from this, that all the students will steal without shame or fear. The great majority would contemn such conduct, and would much rather have their cooking done by servants in the kitchen, than attempt such work themselves. But with very many the state of morals is altogether different from any thing I have been accustomed to. They call these things 'scrapes,' and seem unconscious of the dishonesty and meanness of their conduct.

But to return to the *roast*. When I found that the fowls were stolen, and that the potatoes that were boiling over the fire were stolen also, and that one of the students had milked a cow which was grazing near the college to obtain milk for the repast, I began to feel some qualms of conscience about partaking of this stolen entertainment. I began also to feel the more anxious to be gone, since I plainly saw that my conversation had made

me rather an unwelcome guest. The *cooks*, who were clearing up the room, began to look sour and morose. Every thing went wrong, one was scolding, another fretting, the chickens were burned, the chocolate boiled over; one in his haste knocked two or three dishes from the table, and they were dashed upon the floor, greatly alarming the company, lest the tutor should be roused by the noise. In fine, we were anything in the world but happy. I was meditating some way of escape, for I had determined to go, but knew not in what way most easily to excuse myself.

Just at this moment we heard the cry of *fire*. Looking out of the windows, which we had darkened by hanging up blankets, we saw the whole college yard illuminated, as though the roof of the building we were in was in flames. The glowing cinders began to roll down the chimney, and we saw at once that it was our own chimney on fire which had communicated the alarm. I cannot describe to you the terror into which we were thrown. We knew that in a moment, the tutors and students would rush into our room, and what a scene would they behold. I felt as much terrified as any of the rest, for you may suppose that I was not desirous of being detected in such company, and in such a scrape. There was no time for deliberation, we heard the enemy upon the stairs; one sprung to the bolted door to keep it fast, the others seized the table cloth by the four corners, threw upon it the roasted chickens, the pot of boiling potatoes, the plates of gravy, and bringing the four

corners of the cloth together, they swung the whole load in one promiscuous heap of broken crockery, salt, butter, and potatoes, pepper, gravy, and fowl, into the bed room, and *under the bed.* Never was a dinner table so expeditiously cleared, never was there so disastrous a consummation of an anticipated feast. In another instant the books were upon the table, the blankets torn from the windows, and the room assuming its ordinary appearance, with the exception of rather a glowing fire, and the occupants having burning cheeks and disordered dress. In the midst of the confusion I made my escape, just as the crowd were rushing into the room. I have not taken the pains since, to inquire in what state they found their good things after the crowd had withdrawn, or what pleasure they took in the gentlemanly employment of washing the dishes.

You must not infer from this description, that the majority of the students engage in such scenes. This is by no means the case; in every class there are a few of the idle and the dissolute, who, having no respect for themselves, and no regard for future usefulness and happiness, waste their time, and pervert their talents, in working out for themselves present sorrow and future disgrace. These are sure to be the most unhappy members of the college; they are always in trouble, but they are the ones who make a noise, and whose dissipated conduct is constantly attracting the attention of the community around. The many who pass their time in diligent study and profitable reading, are not known. In the seclusion of their rooms, they are

laying up stores of knowledge, and acquiring discipline, and energy, and grasp of mind, which will guide them to influence and happiness in the great theatre of life.

There are several societies in college for intellectual improvement. The members are generally chosen by ballot, from the most respectable scholars of their class. Subjects are assigned for composition and for extemporaneous debate. These intellectual entertainments are very profitable, and in these humble debates, many are acquiring skill to address the jury, and influence the senate.

We have three terms a year, of three months each. The intervening vacations consume the rest of the year.

We insert the following article as illustrative of some of the scenes in college life.

THE PLEASURES OF A COLLEGE 'SCRAPE.'

It was a cold December evening, dark, cloudy, and rainy. I had a book of nautical sketches in my hand, and a cigar in my mouth. My room-mate, who would be classed by naturalists under the name Facetiosi, was sitting upon the other side of the table, which stood, covered with books, in the centre of the room. His feet were elevated upon the mantle, and he was pouring forth wreaths of smoke from an immense 'long nine,' which adorned his mouth. The glowing embers of a good fire warmed and enlivened the room.

'Chum,' said I, 'let us have a scrape to-night.'

'Agreed,—but what shall we do?'

'A bonfire would look nobly this dark night,' I replied, as I rose and looked out upon the cold and dismal scene.

'Very well,—light the dark lantern, and here—turn your coat inside out, so that no one will know you. And where is that piece of burnt cork? We had better black our faces a little.'

The burnt cork could not be found. However, we soon rigged ourselves in such a disguise, that no one could have detected us by our dress, and then sallied forth on our expedition of fun and frolic.

About half a mile from college, there were some empty tar-barrels, which we thought would most effectually dispel the gloom of the night. Just as we got hold of one, a gust of wind rattled a pile of boards near us. We thought that the owner of the barrel was upon us, and aware that discretion was the better part of valour, we retreated, at the top of our speed. Chum, in his hurried flight, stumbled over a log, and in a twinkling, was lying prostrate in the mud. In his fright, however, he felt that there was no time to be wasted, and with bruised cheeks and bleeding nose, and drenched with rain, he again manifested that 'discretion,' which is 'the better part of valour.' Finding that we were not pursued, we began to think that we had fled at a false alarm: I therefore proposed returning to the charge, but found that my Chum's zeal, as might naturally have been expected, had become wonderfully cooled.

'Fun!' exclaimed he, 'is this what you call fun? Just hold up your lantern, and look at my face and clothes!'

'To be sure,' said I, as I looked at his woe-begone appearance, 'I can conceive of a more agreeable situation for a man to be in. But I would not give up now, Chum.'

'Well,' said he, 'we are in for a scrape, and let us have it out. But I assure you, my wet feet and clothes, to say nothing of the bruises, do not feel very comfortable this cold night.'

We soon were tugging at the tar-barrel again. It was wet and heavy, and we found it no light task to carry it such a distance. After toiling and fretting for some time, Chum stopped in despair.

'Why, Henry,' said he, 'I am prodigiously tired, and we have a quarter of a mile further to carry this heavy thing through the mud.'

'To tell the truth, Chum,' I responded, 'I wish I had put on some old clothes, I have got this tar all over my pantaloons.'

'Horrible,' said Chum, 'I never thought of the tar on the outside. Here, hold the light. Let me look at my clothes.'

Oh, what a picture for Hogarth! His coat was turned inside out, and drenched with water and mud. His pantaloons were in a similar plight, the tar being in various places fairly *worked in* to the very texture of the cloth. His face was muddy and scratched, and there was upon it a most ludicrous expression of perplexity and vexation. However, pride and will were enlisted, and after a little delay,

we soon were again trudging along with our burden. Chum had hold of one side of the barrel, and I the other, while the lantern was resting upon its head; and when at length we arrived in the college-yard, the chapel-clock was tolling eleven.

'Henry,' said Chum, 'do you go out to the yard there, and get some shavings, while I go up to the room and get a tinder-box. Our lantern is broken all to pieces.'

I went groping along in the dark, through mud and water, and wet grass, to get some fuel. After searching for some time, I succeeded in obtaining some shavings, which I thought sufficiently dry to kindle. Hastening back to the barrel, I found Chum waiting with his tinder-box. We arranged the fuel, struck a light, and applied the match. A clear beautiful flame arose gracefully into the darkened air. As however, for sufficient reasons, we "loved darkness rather than light," we fled with the utmost precipitation from the illuminated circle, and softly crept to our rooms. Almost breathless, we hastened to the window, to gaze upon our splendid bonfire, and lo! all was Egyptian darkness. Not the least glimmer of light cheered our eyes.

It was intolerable to fail, after having done so much; so out we sallied again, to see if we could not kindle our wet fuel to a flame. By dint of much perseverance, we obtained some dry materials, and soon secured a more sure fire, which began to burn in earnest, and to illuminate the objects around its bright flashes. We had so arranged the fuel now,

that we felt confident it would burn, though it would take some time for it to get fairly on fire. It was necessary for us to go directly by the tutor's door, as we went up the third story of the building to our own room. The windows of the tutor's room looked out upon the fire, and we feared detection if he should hear us going by at that late hour of the night. As we entered the entry, therefore, we took off our shoes, and crept along as softly as possible. The clock struck twelve as we were ascending the first flight of stairs. Just as we were opposite the tutor's door, creeping along almost breathless, the door opened, and out came the tutor, with a candle in his hand. He held the candle in my face, and in the most gentlemanly manner imaginable, called me by name; and then turning to Chum, with the same gentlemanly, and provokingly complacent voice, called him by name.

As his eye glanced down our disguised and muddy clothes, to our unshod feet, and rested a moment upon the shoes in our hands, I fancied I saw a smile struggling to curl his lip. However, he restrained it, and very politely said, 'Good night, young gentlemen,' and turned to go into his room. But suddenly he stopped, as though a new thought had struck him, and said,

'I perceive there is a little fire kindling out in the yard, would you be so kind as to go down with me, and help me to extinguish it?'

There was no time to hold a council of war, and each followed the other. Never was a man so perfectly civil as was the tutor; and never were two

wretches so perfectly crest-fallen, as my companion and I. We very submissively and silently followed him out into the yard; for how in the world could we refuse so respectful and reasonable a request?

'Will you be kind enough,' said he to me, 'just to roll that tar-barrel out into that puddle of water. I would help you, but I see your gloves are already wet.'

'Indeed, you do!' thought I, 'and how in the world do you suppose they became wet?' But it would not do for me to think aloud.

'Mr. G.,' said he to my Chum, 'will you just put those brands in the water, and plunge them under a little, so that they cannot be set on fire again easily.'

Hiss went the brands, and all was again as dark as night. We groped our way along to the College, but the blood rushed into my face, as once or twice I heard a kind of stifled noise, as though the tutor was trying to restrain convulsive peals of laughter. Whether this were the case or not, he was perfectly composed by the time he came to the door of his room, where the light shone upon our faces.

'Good night, young gentlemen,' said he, very pleasantly, 'I am much obliged to you for your assistance. Let me light you up stairs.'

As we walked up the stairs, he very politely held the candle, so that he could leisurely inspect the beauties of our appearance.

'Well,—well,—well!' said Chum, as we closed

the door of our room, 'If this is what you call a scrape, I don't desire to get into another.'

'Why?' said I, 'he does not know that we made the fire.'

'Does not know it!!' said Chum, 'Did you ever hear one of the government call a student *Mister*, before? Why, he treated us as respectfully as though we were the most important personages in the country. Does not know it? Why, what in the world does he suppose you are dressed in that pea jacket for? and with that old ragged hat on? And what does he suppose this coat of mine means, turned inside out, and all this tar, which he could not help seeing. I would give twenty dollars this very minute, to be out of this scrape.'

I felt a little worse than my Chum, and accordingly tried to conceal my feelings by forced jokes.

'What a beautiful fire we have got out there,' said I, looking out into the total darkness of the night.

'Come, come, Henry,' said he, 'I think we have had fun enough, such as it is, for one night, and I am going to bed. I have ruined those clothes completely,' he continued, as he began to undress, 'I shall never be able to wear them again. And now our fire is all out, and we must go to bed with feet both wet and cold; if we are not sick after this, it will be very strange.'

I saw that Chum was indeed in a gloomy mood, and as I in heart felt no less so, we both in silence prepared for bed. Any person who knows what it is to go to bed chilled through, with exposure to

the rain, and with feet in the state of wet icicles, will know that we could not soon fall asleep.

We had been in bed, I should think, half an hour, in perfect silence. I was thinking, with a good deal of anxiety, of the probable consequences of the evening's adventure.

'Henry,' said Chum, in a voice which showed that he was as far from sleep as I, 'Henry, if they suspend us, what shall we do?'

'Poh, Chum,' said I, 'do not talk so, it makes me feel ugly.'

'Well, said he, drily, if the talking makes you feel ugly, how will the reality make you feel? They will have us up before the government to-morrow, and what under the sun can we say? We shall have to spend a few months in the country, as sure as the world, and that will be fine tidings to be carried home.'

My heart beat quick, as I felt the strong probability that Chum's apprehensions would be realised. At last, however, I fell into a light doze, and in troubled dreams was arraigned before the government of the college. There was no escape from detection: I received a suspension bill, and almost distracted with shame, went to a most dismal abode in the country. Again, I went home in disgrace; I met my father and mother, and oh, how deeply did I feel reproached by their silent grief. Thus the night passed away, till the morning-bell called us to prayers. We both rose with stiffened limbs; Chum found, to his extreme mortification, that the scratches he had received on his face by his fall, were

too deep for water to remove, and as he had taken so violent a cold that he could hardly speak, he felt it to be necessary for him, if possible, to avoid making his appearance.

I, however, after having dressed myself in a new suit of clothes, went into the chapel to prayers, and from prayers to the recitation-room. As the students flocked along, the remains of the miserable failure of the bonfire attracted their attention, and many were the cutting jokes that were thrown out against the unfortunate fellows who, 'tried to, and couldn't.'

In the recitation room, I was called upon to recite, but made most wretched work of it. A kind of half-smile struggled upon the tutor's lip, as he said in a low voice, and almost inarticulate to every one but me. 'You may sit down;—you are very excusable, as you were assisting me last evening.'

'W-h-a-t!' whispered the student who sat next me, 'w-h-a-t in the world did he say to you?'

I endeavoured as well as I could, to shuffle off the question; but, immediately after recitation, some dozen of the students came clustering around me to ascertain what I had been helping the tutor to do. I could not conceal my confusion, but I did not dare to let the truth be known; for I knew it would be a standing joke against me, that I should never hear the last of.

We went to breakfast, but I had no appetite. The apprehension of being called into the President's study, and receiving either a public repri-

mand, or a bill of suspension, made me most perfectly wretched. And when I returned to my room, there was poor Chum, looking very much like a culprit waiting his execution. We had not watched at the window long, before we saw the tutor going straight as an arrow across the college-yard, to the President's study. Our blood chilled within us, as we awaited the summons which should call us into that dread presence. A half-hour of most woeful suspense passed away, and we saw the tutor returning. We thought that the awful moment was now at hand; but the tutor went quietly to his room, and during the forenoon no message came for us. We were, however, continually expecting a summons, and we were in such a state of apprehension, that it was impossible to study. Towards the close of the forenoon, we concluded that there was not time to assemble the government in the morning, and that they had postponed the subject till the evening. The anxiety we were in was so great, that an immediate settlement in almost any way, would have been a relief. Evening came, and we sat down at our fire-side with most unenviable feelings. Presently there was a tap at the door; my blood curdled; 'Come in,' said Chum, with a faultering voice. It was a fellow student; the weary hours of the apparently interminable evening lagged along, and still no summons from the government.

'Why, Henry,' said Chum, 'it cannot be that the tutor has not informed against us.'

'No,' said I, 'we were so completely caught,

that we shall of course be hauled up for it. But if they were going to *suspend* us, I think they would have had a meeting to-day. You know they have a government meeting every Wednesday evening. I rather think, as they have got us so safe they have put off the subject till then.'

These thoughts were a little relief to our minds, but they lengthened out the period of our suspense. Wednesday evening, at length came, and with it freshened feelings of apprehension. But the evening passed away—and the next day—and the next, and no notice was taken of our evening adventure. Gradually, our feelings became calm, and the remembrance of the 'scrape' ceased to haunt our minds. The tutor was a generous man, as ever lived, and probably thought that our detection by himself was punishment enough. At any rate we felt it to be so, for, one evening, as we were sitting musing by the fire-side, Chum suddenly spoke up—

'Henry, if ever I felt grateful to a man in my life, I do to our tutor; and if I live to graduate, I will thank him for his forbearance.'

Several months after the event we have now been relating, a student came into our room, late on a dark evening.

'Come,' said he, 'won't you go and have a scrape?'

'Scrape! you rascal!—you scoundrel!—you villain!' shouted he in the vehemence of his indignation;—'Do you want to get me into a scrape? I have been in one, and it was almost the death of me. Get out of my room this instant.'

The fellow fled in terror, and no one else ever asked Chum or me to enjoy the pleasures of a college ' scrape.'

Perhaps some of our readers may feel desirous to know what studies are pursued in the New England Colleges, and how far the students are advanced in these studies. All the New England Colleges are on nearly the same level. The course of study in any one, so nearly corresponds with the course of study in all the rest, that students are, without difficulty, removed from one to another without any alteration in their collegiate standing. Therefore in giving the following course of study which is pursued in Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, we give the standard of education in the New England Colleges generally.

TERMS OF ADMISSION.

Candidates for admission into the Freshmen class, are required to write Latin grammatically, and to be well versed in geography, arithmetic, six sections in Smyth's Algebra, Cicero's Select Orations, the Bucolics, Georgics, and Æneid of Virgil, Sallust, the Gospels of the Greek Testament, and Jacob's Greek Reader. They must produce certificates of their good moral character. The usual time for examination is the Friday after commencement. Candidates for admission into the other classes will be examined also, in the books which have been studied by the class into which admission is requested. Scholars from other colleges, before

they can be examined, must produce a certificate of their regular dismission. The geography to be studied may be Morse's, Worcester's, or Cumming's.

COURSE OF STUDY.

FRESHMEN CLASS.

First Term.—Anabasis of Xenophon, (three books.)
Folsom's Livy, (two books.)
Lacroix's Arithmetic, Smyth's Algebra.

Second Term.—Adams' Roman Antiquities.
Anabasis, finished.
Folsom's Livy.
Smyth's Algebra.

Third Term.—Herodotus (first Persian wars, sixth book, commenced.)
Excerpta Latina (Paterculus and Quintus Curtius.)
Smyth's Algebra.
Hodge's Logic.
Daily exercises in Elocution, during one half the term.

SOPHOMORE CLASS.

First Term.—Herodotus, continued.
Horace, (the Odes.)
Legendre's Geometry.
French Language.

Second Term.—Herodotus, continued.
Excerpta Latina, (Tacitus.)
Smyth's Trigonometry. Cambridge Mathematics, (Heights and distances, Surveying and Navigation)
French Language.

Third Term.—Herodotus, continued.
Horace (Satires.)
Cambridge Mathematics (Projecting, Levelling, and Application of Algebra to Geometry.)
Murray's English Grammar.
Newman's Rhetoric.
French Language.

JUNIOR CLASS.

First Term.—Horace, (Ars Poetica) Juvenal.
Spanish or Greek, (Homer's Iliad, five books.)
Cambridge Mechanics.

Second Term.—Calculus.
Spanish or Greek, (Homer's Iliad, five books.)
Electricity—Magnetism—Optics.
Upham's Elements of Mental Philosophy.

Third Term.—Homer's Iliad and Juvenal, reviewed.
Calculus, Cambridge Mathematics.

Mental Philosophy continued.
Rawle's View of the American Constitution.

SENIOR CLASS.

First Term.—Astronomy and Mathematics.
Paley's Evidences.
Stewart on the Active and Moral Powers.
Vattel's Law of Nations.

Second Term.—Chemistry.
Political Economy.
Butler's Analogy.
Italian, German, and Hebrew languages.

Third Term.—Natural History.
Cleaveland's Mineralogy.
Butler's Analogy.
Italian, German, and Hebrew.

EXERCISES DURING THE YEAR.

Private Declamations of the two lower classes, and Public Declamations of the two upper classes.

Compositions in English, of the two upper classes.

Forensic Disputations of the juniors and seniors.

Weekly translations into Latin by the Freshmen class.

Translation into English by the Sophomore class.

Two weeks preceding the term, examinations are spent in review of the studies of the term.

LECTURES.

Spring Term.—On Chemistry, to the junior and senior classes.

Summer Term.—On Natural Philosophy, to the junior and senior classes.
On Mineralogy, to the senior class.
On Rhetoric and Oratory.

EXAMINATIONS.

1. Of all the classes, at the close of the first and second terms.
2. Of the senior class, on the sixth Tuesday preceding Commencement.
3. Of the three other classes, during the preceding Commencement.

EXHIBITIONS.

1. Of the senior and junior classes in May and November.
2. Of the Sophomore class (a prize declamation) in August.

ANNUAL EXPENSES.

	DOL.	CTS.
Tuition	24	00
Room Rent	10	00
Board in Commons	45	00
Incidental charges in College bills	10	00
Other expenses; as wood, lights, washing, stationary, use of books and furniture	30	00
	119	00

VACATIONS.

1. From Commencement, which is on the first Wednesday of September, three weeks.

2. From the Friday after the third Wednesday of December, eight weeks.

3. From the Friday after the third Wednesday of May, two weeks.

There is also, in connexion with this College, a large and flourishing Medical School.

COMMENCEMENT.

At the close of each collegiate year, the members of the graduating class have parts assigned them, according to their respective scholarship, for public exhibition. Generally, the officers of the college assign to each, a dissertation, or a dialogue, or an oration. At the appointed day, which is called *Commencement day*, the friends of the graduating students, together with a vast concourse of the neighbouring people, assemble to witness the exercises of the occasion. It is a day of great festivity. The young students adorn their rooms with evergreens and flowers, and provide light entertainments for their friends. The best band of music which the region can furnish, is provided, to animate and enliven the assembled multitude. Not unfrequently, booths are erected in the vicinity, around which a disorderly crowd pass the day in riot and confusion. The temperance reformation, however, has recently nearly removed this disgrace.

From a stage in the College chapel, or the more

spacious neighbouring church, the graduating class address the thronging audience upon the subjects that have been assigned them. The band occasionally relieves the attention of the assembly, by its richest strains of music. At the close of the exercises, each student receives from the President his degree, and feels at once, that he has passed the period of his pupilage, and has launched forth into the world, independent and free.

From the college, some go into mercantile life, but the most enter the divinity, law, or medical schools, which are established, either in connexion with the college, or in different parts of the country.

Perhaps in this connexion I ought to say a word upon the subject of Theological education. There are several Theological Seminaries scattered throughout the New England States. That at Andover, in the state of Massachusetts, is by far the most prominent as respects its endowments, the number of its students, and the influence it is exciting upon the world. The names of many of its learned professors are known throughout the Christian world. Their influence is felt in sustaining the Calvinistic system of doctrine, and the Congregational system of church government. It is a private institution, endowed by private munificence. It is neither fostered by state patronage, nor retarded in its operations by legislative powers. Two large and commodious buildings of brick, four stories high, and containing thirty-two rooms each, afford accommodation for nearly all the students. A few are under the necessity of obtaining rooms in the

private dwellings of the village. A beautiful chapel is situated between the two buildings above mentioned; it contains a room sufficiently large for the students and the families of the Professors to assemble for public worship; also a large and beautiful library-room, and three lecture-rooms. The average number of students of late years, is a little above a hundred. None are admitted but those who give satisfactory evidence of piety, that is, as the term is understood by the evangelical portion of the community. They must also have received a collegiate education, or if not, one corresponding with that pursued in our colleges, and intend to devote themselves to the gospel ministry. Especial efforts are made by the professors, in their instructions, and in all the arrangements of the institution, to cultivate in the hearts of these candidates for the ministry, the most fervent and self-denying piety. There are three classes, called the junior, middle, and senior. The first year the Bible is studied in the original languages. All the aid which can be obtained from the learning of other commentators, without regard to their peculiar views, is eagerly sought. The Bible, however, is the text book, and the Dictionary, with other philological helps, the principal expositor. As the class assembles in the lecture room, there is free discussion of the meaning of the passage to which they are attending. Freedom of investigation is earnestly encouraged, in connexion with a humble and prayerful spirit. In the lecture-room every mind is on the alert, and each individual is willing to express dissent from

the opinion expressed by his fellow-student or the professor. The study of the Bible is thus prosecuted during the year, with unwearied diligence. The second year is devoted to the investigation of Doctrinal Theology. The following is a list of the topics which engage attention, in the order in which they are taken up. 1. Natural Theology. 2. Evidences of Divine Revelation. 3. Inspiration of the Scriptures. 4. Christian Theology. 5. Divine Attributes. 6. Trinity in the Godhead. 7. Character of Christ. 8. Sonship of Christ. 9. Holy Spirit. 10. Divine Purposes. 11. Moral Agency. 12. Original Apostacy. 13. Character and State of Man since the Fall. 14. Atonement. 15. Regeneration. 16. Christian Virtue, or Holiness, 17. Particular Branches of Christian Virtue. 18. Justification. 19. Perseverance of the Saints. 20. Future State. 21. Future Punishment. 22. Positive Institutions. 23. Christian Church. 24. Infant Baptism. 25. Mode of Baptism. 26. Lord's Supper. These general topics, of course, admit of many subdivisions, which it is not necessary here to introduce. There is an outline of the course of study placed in the hands of each of the students, in which there is reference to all the important works in the library, which treat of the subject under investigation. The students become familiar with the reasonings of writers on both sides. They discuss the subjects with entire freedom with one another, and in the lecture-room with the professor. No one hesitates to bring forward any objection which his reading or his meditations have

suggested. Every student knows that in this land, where there is such unrestrained license of opinion, the clergyman must be continually meeting with the strongest arguments of subtle foes. They all know that it is necessary that they should be well armed for the conflict which awaits them. Another consequence is, that the cavils of the infidel are, perhaps, as thoroughly studied, as the arguments of the Christian. The above outline certainly does not contain all the important topics in Christian Theology. It is intended merely as the foundation, deep and broad, upon which the student is to build in future years. It gives direction to his studies, and tells him what he wants.

The third year is devoted to Sacred Rhetoric, the critical preparation of sermons, the study of church history and pastoral duties. During the latter part of the year, the students occasionally preach in the chapel, and in the neighbouring villages. And the demand for ministerial labour is so great, that but a few months elapse after they leave the seminary, before nearly all are settled. The demand for pastors is vastly greater than our seminaries can at present supply.

The spirit of missions has, to a wonderful degree, animated the students of this seminary, from its first establishment. The sons of Andover are now scattered over the whole world. They are travelling the 'Celestial Empire,' and speaking, in the language of China, to her countless multitudes. They are knocking at the gates of Jerusalem, and speaking in the mosques of Constantinople. They

are in the wigwams of the Indian; in the immense wildernesses of our own country; and we scattered throughout the islands of the Pacific, in Ceylon, and Bombay, and Central India. They are preaching to almost every nation, the gospel of glad tidings.

There are many other similar institutions in the land, but none other so prominent in influence, with the exception of the Unitarian Theological School at Cambridge. If we mistake not, there is no one sustained, either directly or indirectly, by the bounty of the State. And it is a subject of dispute between the Unitarians and the Orthodox, whether that school is in reality, a subject of State patronage. If the state grants an act of incorporation to the Trustees of a Theological institution, its liberality is trusted to the utmost. It does all that even the friends of the institution deem it desirable that the state should do. The conviction is deep and strong in the hearts of Christians, that all that religion asks of the government is, to be *let alone*. It desires to be left to its own untrammelled energies, and to rely for support upon the protection of its friends.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISTRICT SCHOOL.

THE old school-house, as it used to be called,—how distinctly it rises to existence anew before the eye of my mind. Here was kept the District School as it *was*. This was the seat of my rustic *alma mater*, to borrow a phrase from collegiate and classic use. It is now no more, and those of similar construction are passing away, never to be seen again. It may be well, therefore, to describe the edifice wherein, and whereabout, occurred many of the scenes about to be recorded. I would have future generations acquainted with the accommodations, or rather dis-accommodations of their predecessors.

The old school-house in District No. 5, stood on the top of a very high hill, on the north side of what was called the county road. The house of Captain Clark, about ten rods off, was the only human dwelling within a quarter of a mile. The reason why this seminary of letters was perched so high in the air, and so far from the homes of those who resorted to it was this. Here was the centre

of the district, as near as the surveyor's chain could designate. The people east would not permit the building to be carried one rod further west, and those of the opposite quarter were as obstinate on their side. So here it was placed, and this continued to be literally the hill of science to generation after generation of learners for fifty years.

The edifice was set half in Captain Clark's field, and half in the road. The wood-pile lay in the corner made by the east end and the stone wall. The best roof it ever had over it was the changeful sky, which was a little too leaky to keep the fuel at all times fit for combustion, without a great deal of puffing and smoke. The door-step was a broad unhewn rock, brought from the neighbouring pasture; it had not a flat and even surface, but was considerably sloping from the door to the road, so that in icy times, the scholars in passing out, used to snatch from the scant declivity, the transitory pleasure of a slide. But look out for a slip-up, ye careless, for many a time have I seen the urchin's head where his feet were but a second before. And once the most lofty and perpendicular pedagogue I ever knew, became suddenly horizontalized in his egress.

But we have lingered round this door-step long enough. Before we cross it, however, let us just glance at the outer side of the structure. It was never painted by man, but the clouds of many years had stained it with their own dark hue. The nails were starting from their fastness, and fellow-clapboards were becoming less closely and warmly

intimate. There were six windows, which here and there stopped and distorted the passage of light by fractures, patches, and seams of putty. There were shutters of board, like those of a store, which were of no kind of use, excepting to keep the windows from harm in vacations, when they were the least liable to harm. They might have been convenient screens against the summer sun, were it not that their shade was inconvenient darkness. Some of these from loss of buttons, were fastened back by poles, which were occasionally thrown down in the heedlessness of play, and not replaced till repeated slams had broken a pane of glass, or the patience of the teacher. To crown this description of externals, I must say a word about the roof. The shingles had been battered apart by a thousand rains ; and excepting where the most defective had been exchanged for new ones, they were dingy with the mold and moss of time. The bricks of the chimney-top were losing their cement, and looked as if some high wind might hurl them from their smoky vocation.

We will now go inside. First, there is an entry which the district were sometimes provident enough to store with dry pine-wood as an antagonist to the greenness and wetness of the other fuel. A door on the left admits us to the school-room. Here is a space about twenty feet long and ten wide, the reading and spelling parade. At the south end of it, at the left as you enter, was one seat and writing bench, making a right angle with the rest of the seats. This was occupied in the winter by

two of the oldest males in the school. At the opposite end was the magisterial desk, raised upon a platform a foot from the floor. The fire-place was on the right, half way between the door of entrance and another door leading into a dark closet, where the girls put their outer garments and their dinner baskets. This also served as a fearful dungeon for the immuring of offenders. Directly opposite the fire-place, was an aisle two feet and a half wide, running up an inclined floor to the opposite side of the room: on each side of this, were five or six long seats and writing benches for the accommodation of the school at their studies. In front of these, next to the spelling floor, were low, narrow seats for abecedarians and others near that rank. In general, the older the scholar, the further from the front was his location. The windows behind the back seat were so low, that the traveller could generally catch the stealthy glance of curiosity as he passed. Such was the old school-house at the time I first entered it.

I was at this time three years and a half old. I ought perhaps to have set foot on the first step of learning's ladder before this, but I had no elder brother or sister to lead me to school a mile off; and it never occurred to my good parents, that they could teach me even the alphabet, or perhaps they could not afford the time, or muster the patience for the tedious process. I had, however, learned the name of capital A, because it stood at the head of the column, and was the similitude of a harrow

frame. Of O, also, from its resemblance to a hoop. Its sonorous name moreover was a frequent passenger through my mouth, after I had begun to articulate, its ample sound being the most natural medium by which man born unto trouble, signifies the pains of his lot. X too was familiar, as it seemed so like the end of the old saw-horse that stood in the wood-shed. Further than this my alphabetical lore did not extend, according to present recollection.

I shall never forget my first day of scholarship, as it was the most important era which had yet occurred to my experience. Behold me on the eventful morning of the first Monday in June, arrayed in my new jacket and trowsers, into which my importance had been shoved for the first time in my life. This change in my costume had been deferred till this day that I might be nice and clean to go to school. Then my Sunday hat, (not of soft drab-coloured fur, ye city urchins, but of coarse and hard sheep's wool,) my Sunday hat adorning my head for the first time in common week-day use; for my other had been crushed, torn and soiled out of the seemliness, and almost out of the form of a hat. My little new basket too, bought expressly for the purpose, was laden with election-cake and cheese for my dinner, and slung upon my arm. An old Perry's spelling-book, which our boy Ben used at the winter school, completed my equipment.

Mary Smith was my first teacher, and the dearest to my heart I ever had. She was a niece of Mrs.

Carter, who lived in the nearest house on the way to school. She had visited her aunt the winter before, and her uncle being chosen committee for the school at the town-meeting in the spring, sent immediately to her home in Connecticut and engaged her to teach the summer school. During the few days she spent at his house she had shown herself peculiarly qualified to interest and gain the love of children. Some of the neighbours too, who had dropped in while she was there, were much pleased with her appearance. She had taught one season in her native state, and that she succeeded well, Mr. Carter could not doubt. He preferred her, therefore, to hundreds near by, and for once the partiality of the relative proved profitable to the district.

Now Mary Smith was to board at her uncle's. This was deemed a fortunate circumstance on my account, as she would take that care of me on the way which was needful to my inexperienced childhood. My mother led me to Mr. Carter's to commit me to my guardian and instructor for the summer. I entertained the most extravagant ideas of the dignity of the school-keeping vocation, and it was with trembling reluctance that I drew near the presence of so lovely a creature as they told me Mary Smith was. But she so gently took my quivering little hand, and so tenderly stooped and kissed my cheek, and said such soothing and winning words, that my timidity was gone at once.

She used to lead me to school by the hand, while John and Sarah Carter gamboled on, unless I

chose to gambol with them; but the first day at least, I kept by her side. All her demeanor toward me, and indeed toward us all, was of a piece with her first introduction. She called me to her to read, not with a look and voice as if she were doing a duty she disliked, and was determined I should do mine too, like it or not, as is often the manner of teachers; but with a cheerful smile and a softening eye, as if she were at a pastime, and wished me to partake of it.

My first business was to master the A B C, and no small achievement it was; for many a little learner waddles to school through the summer, and wallows to the same through the winter, before he accomplishes it, if he happens to be taught in the manner of former times. This might have been my lot, had it not been for Mary Smith. Few of the better methods of teaching which now make the road to knowledge so much more easy and pleasant, had then found their way out of, or into the brain of the pedagogical vocation. Mary went on in the old way indeed, but the whole exercise was done with such sweetness on her part, that the dilatory, and usually unpleasant task, was to me a pleasure, and consumed not so much precious time as it generally does in the case of heads as stupid as mine. By the close of that summer the alphabet was securely my own. That hard, and to me unmeaning string of sights and sounds, were bound for ever to my memory by the ties created by gentle tones and looks.

That hardest of all tasks, sitting becomingly still,

was rendered easier by her goodness. When I grew restless and turned from side to side, and changed from posture to posture, in search of relief from my uncomfortableness, she spoke words of sympathy rather than reproof. Thus I was won to be as quiet as I could. When I grew drowsy and needed but a comfortable position to drop into sleep and forgetfulness of the weary hours, she would gently lay me at length on my seat and leave me just falling to slumber, with her sweet smile the last thing beheld or remembered.

Thus wore away my first summer at the district school. As I look back on it, faintly traced on memory, it seems like a beautiful dream, the images of which are all softness and peace. I recollect that when the last day came, it was not one of light-hearted joy, it was one of sadness, and it closed in tears. I was now obliged to stay at home in solitude, for the want of play-mates, and in weariness of the passing time, for the want of something to do, for there was no particular pleasure in saying A B C, all alone, with no Mary Smith's voice and looks for an accompaniment.

As the spelling book was the first manual of instruction used in school, and kept in our hands for many years, I think it worthy of a separate chapter in these annals of the times that are past. The spelling-book used in our school from time immemorial, immemorial at least to the generation of learners to which I belonged, was thus entitled: 'THE ONLY SURE GUIDE to the English Tongue,

by William Perry, Lecturer of the English language in the Academy of Edinburgh, and author of several valuable school books.' What a magnificent title! To what an enviable superiority had its author arrived. The *Only Sure Guide!* Of course the book must be as infallible as the Catholic creed, and its author the very Pope of the jurisdiction of letters.

But the contents of the volume manifested most clearly the pontifical character of the illustrious man; for from the beginning to the end thereof, faith and memory were all that was demanded of the novice. The understanding was no more called on than that of the devotee at his Latin mass-book. But let us enter on particulars. In the first place there was a frontispiece. We little folks, however, did not then know that the great picture facing the title-page was so denominated. This frontispiece consisted of two parts. In the first place there was the representation of a tree laden with fruit of the largest description. It was intended, I presume, as a striking and alluring emblem of the general subject, the particular branches, and the rich fruits of education. But the figurative meaning was above my apprehension, and no one took the trouble to explain it to me. I discerned nothing but the picture of a luxuriant apple-tree, and it always made me think of that good tree in my father's orchard, so dear to my palate, the pumpkin sweeting.

There ran a ladder from the ground up among the branches, which was designed to represent the ladder of learning, but of this I was ignorant. Little boys were ascending this in pursuit of the

fruit that hung there so temptingly; others were already up in the tree plucking the apples directly from their stems; while others were on the ground picking up those that had dropped in their ripeness. At the very top of the tree, with his head reared above all fruit or foliage, was a bare-headed lad with a book in his hand which he seemed intently studying. I supposed that he was a boy that loved his book better than apples, as all good boys should; one who in very childhood had trodden temptation under foot. But indeed it was only a boy who was gathering fruit from the topmost boughs, according to the figurative meaning, as the others were from those lower down. Or rather, as he was pourtrayed, he seemed like one who had culled the fairest and highest growing apples, and was trying to find out from a book, where he should find a fresh and loftier tree upon which he might climb to a richer repast and a nobler distinction.

This picture used to retain my eye longer than any other in the book. It was probably more agreeable on account of the other part of the frontispiece below it. This was the representation of a school at their studies, with the master at his desk. He was pictured as an elderly man with an immense wig enveloping his head, and bagging about his neck, and with a face that had a sort of half-way look, or rather perhaps a compound look made up of an expression of perplexity at a sentence in parsing, or a sum in arithmetic, and a frown at the playful urchins in the distant seats. There could not have been a more capital device by which the

pleasures of a free range and delicious eating, both so dear to the young, might be contrasted with stupifying confinement and longing palates in the presence of crabbed authority. Indeed, the first thing, the 'Only Sure Guide' said to its pupil, was, play truant and be happy. And most of the subsequent contents were not of a character to make the child forget this preliminary advice. These contents I was going on to describe in detail, but on second thought I forbear, for fear that the description might be as tedious to my readers as the study of them was to me. Suffice it to say, that there was a great talk about vowels and consonants, diphthongs and tripthongs, monosyllables and polysyllables, orthography and punctuation, and even about geography, all which was about as intelligible to us who were obliged to commit it to memory, year after year, as the fee-faw-fum uttered by the giant in one of our story books.

Perry's spelling-book, as it was in those days at least, is now out of use. It is no where to be found, except in fragments in some dark corner of a country cupboard or garret. All vestiges of it will soon disappear for ever. What will the rising generations do? into what wilds of barbarism will they wander? into what pits of ignorance fall, without the aid of 'the only sure guide to the English tongue!'

How I longed for the winter school to begin, to which I looked forward as a relief from my do-nothing days, and as a renewal in part at least, of the soft and gliding pleasures of the past summer.

But the schoolmaster, the thought of him was a fearful looking-for of frowns and ferulings. Had I not heard our Ben tell of the direful punishments of the winter school; of the tingling hand, black and blue with twenty strokes, and not to be closed for a fortnight from soreness? Did not the minister and the schoolmaster of the preceding winter visit together at our house one evening, and did I not think the schoolmaster far the more awful man of the two? The minister took me in his lap, gave me a kiss, and told me about his own little Charles at home, whom I must come and see; and he set me down with the impression that he was not half so terrible as I had thought him. But the schoolmaster condescended to no words with me; he was as stiff and unbending as the long kitchen fire shovel, and as solemn of face as a cloudy fast-day. A trifling incident happened which increased my dread, and darkened my remembrance of him by another shade. I had slily crept to the table on which stood the hats of our visitors, and in childish curiosity had first got hold of a glove, then of a letter, which reposed in the crown of the magisterial head-covering. The owner's eye suddenly caught me at the mischief, and he gave me a look and a shake of his upper extremity so full of 'let it alone or I will flog you' in their meaning, that I was struck motionless for an hour with fright, and had hard work to dam up, with all the strength of my quivering lips, a choking baby cry. Thenceforth schoolmasters, to my timid heart, were of all men the most to be dreaded.

The winter at length came, and the first day of the school was fixed and made known, and the longed-for morning finally arrived. With hoping, yet fearing heart, I was led by Ben to school. But my fears respecting the teacher were not realized that winter. He had nothing particularly remarkable about him to my little mind. He had his hands too full of the great things of the great scholars, to take much notice of me, excepting to hear me read my Abs four times a day. This exercise he went through like a great machine, and I like a little one, so monotonous was the humdrum, and regular the recurrence of ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, &c. from day to day, and week to week. To recur to the metaphor of a ladder, by which progress in learning is so often illustrated, I was all summer on the first round, as it were, lifting first one foot and then the other, still putting it down in the same place, without going any higher; and all winter while at school, I was as wearily tap tap-ping it on the second step, with the additional drawback of not having Mary Smith's sweet manners to win me up to the stand, help me cheerfully through the task, and set me down again, pleased with her if with nothing else.

There was one circumstance however in the daily routine, which was a matter of some little excitement and pleasure. I was put into a class; and truly my littleness, feelingly, if not actually and visibly, enlarged itself, when I was called out with Sam Allen, Henry Green, and Susan Clark, to take our stand on the floor as the sixth class. I marched up

with the tread of a soldier, and thinks I, who has a better right to be at the head than myself; so the head I took, as stiff and as straight as a cob. My voice too, if it lost none of its treble, was pitched a key louder, as a-b ab rang through the realm. And when we had finished, I looked up among the large scholars, as I strutted to my seat, with the thought, 'I am almost as big as you now,' puffing out my tiny soul. Now, moreover, I held the book in my own hand, and kept the place with my own finger, instead of standing like a very little boy, with my hands at my side, following with my eye the point of the mistress's scissars.

There was one terror at this winter school which I must not omit in this chronicle of my childhood. It arose from the circumstance of meeting so many faces which I had never seen before, or at least had never seen crowded together in one body. All the great boys and girls who had been kept at home during the summer, now left axes and shovels, needles and spinning-wheels, and poured into the winter school. There they sat side by side, head after head, row above row. For this I did not care; but every time the master spoke to me for any little misdemeanour, it seemed as if they all turned their eyes on my timid self, and I felt petrified by the gaze. But this simultaneous and concentrated eye-shot was the most distressing when I happened to be late, and was obliged to go in after the school were all seated in front of my advance. These forty —I should say eighty eyes, for most of them had two apiece—glancing up from their books as I opened

the door, were as much of a terror to me, as so many deadly gun-muzzles would be to a raw military recruit. I tottered into the room and toward my seat, with a palsying dismay, as if every one was aiming an eye for my destruction.

The severest duty I was ever called to perform was sitting on that little front seat at my first winter school. My lesson in the Abs conveyed no ideas, excited no interest, and of course occupied but very little of my time. There was nothing before me on which to lean my head, or lay my arms, but my own knees. I could not lie down to drowse as in summer, for want of room on the crowded seat. How my limbs ached for the freedom and activity of play. It sometimes seemed as if a drubbing from the master, or a kick across the school-house would have been a pleasant relief.

But these bonds upon my limbs were not all. I had trials by fire in addition. Every cold forenoon the old fire-place, wide and deep, was kept a roaring furnace of flame, for the benefit of blue noses, chattering jaws and aching toes, in the more distant regions. The end of my seat just opposite the chimney was oozy with melting pitch, and sometimes almost smoked with combustion. Judge then of what living flesh had to bear. It was a toil to exist. I truly ate the bread of instruction, or rather nibbled at the crust of it, in the sweat of my face.

But the pleasures and the pains of this season at school did not continue long. After a few weeks the storms and drifts of midwinter keep me mostly at home. Henry Allen was in the same predica-

ment. As for Susan Clark, she did not go at all after the first three or four days. In consequence of the sudden change from roasting within doors, to freezing without, she took a violent cold and was sick all winter.

The next summer Mary Smith was the mistress again. She gave such perfect satisfaction, that there was but one unanimous wish that she should be re-engaged. Unanimous, I said, but it was not quite so, for Captain Clark, who lived close by the school-house, preferred somebody else, no matter whom, fit or not fit, who should board with him, as the teachers usually did. But Mary would board with her aunt Carter as before. Then Mr. Patch's family grumbled not a little, and tried to find fault, for they wanted their Polly to keep the school and board at home, and help her mother night and morning, and save the pay for the board to boot. Otherwise Polly must go into a distant district, with less advantage to the family purse. Mrs. Patch was heard to guess that 'Polly could keep as good a school as any body else. Her *edication* had cost enough any how. She had been to our school summer after summer, and winter after winter, ever since she was a little *gal*, and had then been to the *'cademy* three months besides. She had moreover taught three summers already, and was twenty one, whereas Mary Smith had taught but one, and was only nineteen.' But the committee had not such confidence in the experienced Polly's qualifications. All who had been to school with her knew that her

head was dough, if ever head was. And all who had observed her school-keeping career (she never kept but once in the same place) pretty soon came to the same conclusion, notwithstanding her loaf of brains had been three months in that intellectual oven called by her mother the *'cademy*.

So Mary Smith kept the school, and I had another delightful summer under her care and instruction. I was four years and a half old now, and had grown an inch. I was no tiny, whining, half-scared baby, as in the first summer. No, indeed; I had been to the winter school, had read in a class, and had stood up at the fire with the great boys, had seen a snow-ball fight, and had been accidentally hit once, by the icy missile of big-fisted Joe Swagger.

I looked down upon two or three fresh, slobbering abecedarians with a pride of superiority, greater perhaps than I ever felt again. We read not in ab, eb, &c. but in words that meant something; and before the close of the summer in what were called the 'Reading Lessons,' that is, little words arranged in little sentences.

Mary was the same sweet angel this season as the last. I did not of course need her soothing and smiling assiduity as before, but still she was a mother to me in tenderness. She was forced to caution us younglings pretty often; yet it was done with such sweetness that a caution from her was as effectual as would be a frown, and indeed a blow from many others. At least, so it was with me. She used to resort to various severities with the

refractory and idle, and in one instance she used the ferule; but we all knew, and the culprit knew too, that it was well deserved.

At the close of the school there was a deeper sadness in our hearts than on the last summer's closing day. She had told us that she should never be our teacher again; and should probably never meet many of us again in this world. She gave us much parting advice about loving and obeying God, and loving and doing good to every body. She shed tears as she talked to us, and that made our own flow still more. When we were dismissed, the customary and giddy laugh was not heard. Many were sobbing with grief, and even the least sensitive were softened and subdued to an unusual quietness.

The last time I ever saw Mary was Sunday evening on my way home from meeting. As we passed Mr. Carter's she came out to the chaise where I sat between my parents, to bid us good bye. Oh! that last kiss, that last smile, and those last tones. Never shall I forget them so long as I have power to remember, or capacity to love. The next morning she left for her native town; and before another summer she was married. As Mr. Carter soon moved from our neighbourhood, the dear instructress never visited it again.

This summer a person named Mehitabel Holt was our teacher. It was with eager delight that I set out for school on the first morning. The dull months that intervened between the winter school and the summer, had seemed longer than ever. I

longed for the companionships and the sports of school. I had heard nothing about the mistress, excepting that she was an experienced and approved one. On my way the image of something like Mary Smith arose to my imagination; a young lady with pleasant face and voice, and a winning gentleness of manner. This was natural, for Mary was the only mistress I had ever known, and in fact the only one I had ever seen, who made any impression on my mind in her school-keeping capacity. What then was my surprize when my eyes first fell on Mehitabel Holt. I shall not describe how nature had made her, or time had altered her. Engaging manners and loveliness of character do not depend on the freshness of youth, fineness of complexion, or symmetry of form. She was not lovely, her first appearance indicated this; for the disposition will generally speak through the face. Subsequent experience proved Mehitabel to differ from the dear Mary as much as all that is sour does from the quintessence of sweetness. She had been well-looking, indeed rather beautiful once, I have heard; but if so, the acidity of her temper had diffused itself through, and lamentably corroded this valued gift of nature.

She kept order, for her punishments were horrible, especially to us little ones. She dungeoned us in that windowless closet just for a whisper. She tied us to her chair-post for an hour, because sportive nature tempted our fingers and toes into something like play. If we were restless on our seats, wearied of our posture, fretted by the heat,

or sick of the unintelligible lesson, a twist of the ear, or a snap on the head, from her thimbled finger, reminded us that sitting perfectly still, was the most important virtue of a little boy in school. Our forenoon and afternoon recess was allowed to be five minutes only, and even during that time, our voices must not rise above the tone of quiet conversation. That delightful exercise of juvenile lungs, hallooing, was a capital crime. Our noonings, in which we used formerly to rejoice in the utmost freedom of legs and lungs, were now like the noonings of the sabbath, in the restraints imposed upon us. As Mehitabel boarded at Captain Clark's, any ranging in the fields, or raising of the voice were easily detected by her watchful senses.

As the prevalent idea in these days respecting a good school was, that there should be no more sound and motion than was absolutely necessary, Mehitabel was, on the whole, popular with the parents. She kept us still, and forced us to get our lessons, and that was something uncommon in a mistress; so she was employed the next summer to keep our childhood in bondage. Had her strict rules been enforced by anything resembling Mary Smith's sweet and sympathetic disposition and manners, they would have been endurable. But as it was, our schooling those two summers was a pain to the body, a weariness to the mind, and a disgust to the heart.

I shall not devote a separate chapter to all my summer teachers. What more I may have to say of them I shall put into this. They were none

of them like Mehitabel in severity, nor all of them equal to her in usefulness, and none of them equal in any respect to Mary Smith. Some were very young, scarcely sixteen, and as unfit to manage that "harp of thousand strings," the human mind, as is the unskilled and changeful wind to manage any musical instrument by which science and taste delights the ear. Some kept tolerable order; others made the attempt, but did not succeed; others did not even make the attempt. All would doubtless have done better, had they been properly educated and disciplined themselves.

After I was ten years old, I ceased to attend the summer school except in foul weather, as in fair I was wanted at home on the farm. These scattering days, I and others of nearly the same age, were sent to school by our parents, in hopes that we should get at least a snatch of knowledge; but this rainy-day schooling was nothing but vanity to us, and vexation of spirit to the mistress. We could read and spell better than the younger and regular scholars, and were puffed up with our own superiority. We showed our contempt for the mistress and her orders, by doing mischief ourselves, and leading others into temptation.

If she had the boldness to apply the ferule, we laughed in her face, unless her blows were laid on with something like masculine strength. In case of such severity, we waited for our revenge till the close of the school for the day, when we took the liberty to let saucy words reach her ear, especially if the next day was likely to be fair; knowing

that we were not to re-appear in her realm till foul weather returned again.

There was one circumstance connected with the history of summer schools of so great importance to little folks, that it must not be omitted; it was this: the mistress felt obliged to give little books to all her pupils on the closing day of her school; otherwise she would be thought stingy, and half the good she had done during the summer, would be cancelled by the omission of the expected donations. If she had the least generosity, or hoped to be remembered with any respect and affection, she must devote a week's wages, and perhaps more, to the purchase of these little toy books. My first present, of course, was from Mary Smith; it was not a little book the first summer, but it was something that pleased me more.

The last day of the school had arrived; all, as I have somewhere said before, were sad that it was now to finish. My only solace was, that I should now have a little book, for I was not unmoved in the general expectation that prevailed. After the reading, and spelling, and all the usual exercises of the school were over, Mary took from her desk a pile of the glittering little things we were looking for. What beautiful covers—red, yellow, blue, green. Oh! not the first buds of spring, not the first rose of summer, not the rising moon, nor gorgeous rainbow, seemed so charming as that first pile of books now spread out on her lap, as she sat in her chair in front of the school. All eyes were now

centred on the outspread treasure. Admiration and expectation were depicted on every face. Pleasure glowed in every heart, for the worst as well as the best calculated with certainty on a present. What a beautifier of the countenance agreeable emotions are. The most ugly-visaged were beautiful now with the radiance of keen anticipation. The scholars were called out one by one to receive the dazzling gifts, beginning at the eldest. I being an abecedarian must wait till the last; but as I knew that my turn would surely come in due order, I was tolerably patient. But what was my disappointment, my exceeding bitterness of grief, when the last book on Mary's lap was given away, and my name not yet called. Every one present had received, except myself and two others of the a b c rank. I felt the tears starting to my eyes, my lips were drawn to their closest pucker to hold in my emotions from audible outcry. I heard my fellow-sufferer at my side draw long and heavy breaths, the usual preliminaries to the bursting out of grief. This feeling however was but momentary, for Mary immediately said, Charles, and Henry, and Susan, you may now all come to me together, at the same time her hand was put into her workbag. We were at her side in an instant, and by that time she held in her hand—what? not three little picture books, but what was to us a surprising novelty, viz. three little birds wrought from sugar by the confectioner's art. I had never seen, or heard of, or dreamed of such a thing. What a revulsion of delighted feeling now

swelled my little bosom. 'If I should give you little books,' said Mary, 'you could not read them at present, so I have got for you what you will like better perhaps, and there will be time enough for you to have books when you shall be able to read them; so take these little birds, and see how long you can keep them.' We were perfectly satisfied, and even felt ourselves distinguished above the rest. My bird was more to me than all the songsters in the air, although it could not fly, or sing, or open its mouth. I kept it for years, until by accident it was crushed to pieces and was no longer a bird.

But Susan Clark, I was provoked at her. Her bird was nothing to her but a piece of pepperminted sugar, and not a keepsake from Mary Smith. She had not left the school-house before she had nibbled off its bill. But her mother was always tickling her palate with sugar-plums, rasins, lozenges, and the like, which the rest of us were not accustomed to; and she had no idea that the sweet little sugar bird was made, or at least, was given, for the sake of her heart rather than her palate.

The next summer my present was the 'Death and Burial of Cock Robin.' This was from the dearly-loved Mary too. I could then do something more than look at the pictures. I could read the tragic history which was told in verse below the pictured representations of the mournful drama. How I used to gaze and wonder at what I saw in that little book. Could it be that all this really took place; that the sparrow really did do the murderous deed with his bow and his arrow? I

never knew before that birds had such things. Then there was the fish with his dish, the rook with his book, the owl with his shovel, &c. Yet if it were not all true why should it be so pictured and related in the book? I had the impression that every thing that was printed in a book was surely true; and as no one thought to explain to me the nature of a fable, I went on puzzling and wondering till progressive reason at length divined its meaning. But Cock Robin with his red cover and gilded edges,—I have it now. It is the first little book I ever received, and it was from Mary Smith; and as it is the only tangible memento of her goodness that I possess, I shall keep it as long as I can.

I had a similar present each successive season so long as I regularly attended the summer-school. What marvels did they contain! How curiosity and wonder feasted on their contents! They were mostly about giants, fairies, witches, and ghosts. By this kind of reading superstition was trained up to a monstrous growth; and as courage could not thrive in its cold and gloomy shadow, it was a sickly shoot for years. Giants, fairies, witches and ghosts were ready to pounce upon me from every dark corner in the day time, and from all around in the night, if I happened to be alone. I trembled to go to bed alone for years; and I was often almost paralyzed with horror when I chanced to wake in the stillness of midnight, and my ever-busy fancy presented the grim and grinning images with which I supposed darkness to be peopled.

I wish I had all those little books now. I would

keep them as long as I live, and at death would bequeath them to the national Lyceum, or some other institution, to be kept as a schoolmaster keeps a pupil's first writing, as a specimen, or a mark to show what improvement has been made. Indeed, if improvement has been made in any thing, it has been in respect to children's books. When I compare the world of fact in which the 'Little Philosophers' of the present day live, observe, and enjoy, with the visionary regions where I wandered, wondered, believed, and trembled, I almost wish to be a child again, to know the pleasure of having earliest curiosity fed with fact, instead of fiction and folly, and to know so much about the great world with so young a mind.

On my fifth summer, at the age of seven and a half, I commenced the study of grammar. The book generally used in our school by beginners, was called the Young Lady's Accidence! I had the honour of a new one. The Young Lady's Accidence! How often have I gazed on that last word and wondered what it meant. Even now I cannot define it, though of course, I have a guess at its meaning. Let me turn this very minute to that oracle of definitions, the venerable Webster. 'A small book containing the rudiments of grammar.' That is it then. But what an intelligible and appropriate term for a little child's book. The mysterious title however was most appropriate to the contents of the volume, for they were all mysterious, and that for years, to my poor understanding.

Well, my first lesson was to get the Parts of Speech, as they are called. What a grand achievement, to engrave on my memory these ten separate and strange words. With what ardour I took my lesson from the mistress and trudged to my seat. It was a new study, and it was the first day of the school moreover, before the bashfulness occasioned by a strange teacher had subsided, and before the spirit of play had been excited. So there was nothing at the moment to divert me from the lofty enterprize.

Reader, let your mind's eye peep into that old school-house. See that little boy in the second high seat from the front, in home-made and home-dyed sea-green cotton jacket and trowsers, with a clean Monday morning collar turned out from his neck. His new book is before him on the bench, kept open by his left hand, His right supports his head on its palm, with the corresponding elbow pressed on the bench. His lips move, but at first very slowly. He goes over the whole lesson in a low whisper. He now looks off his book, and pronounces two or three of the first, article, noun, pronoun; then just glances at the page, and goes on with two or three more. He at length repeats several words without looking. Finally he goes through the long catalogue with his eye fastened on vacancy. At length how his lips flutter; and you hear the parts of speech whizzing from his tongue like feathered arrows. A good simile that. Parts of speech—they are indeed arrows of thought, though as yet armed with no point, and shot at no mark.

There! the rigmarole is accomplished; he starts up and is at his mistress's side in a moment. 'Will you hear my lesson, ma'am.' As she takes the book, he looks directly in her face, and repeats the aforementioned words loudly and distinctly, as if there were no fear of failure. He has got as far as the adverb, but now he hesitates, his eye drops, his lips are open ready for utterance, but the word does not come. He shuts them, he presses them hard together, he puts his finger to them, and there is a painful hiatus in his recitation, a disconnection, an *anti* to the very word he is after. 'Conjunction,' says the mistress. The little hand leaves the lips at the same time that an involuntary 'O' bursts out from them. He lifts his head and his eye, and repeats with spirit the delinquent word, and goes on without hesitation to the end of the lesson. 'Very well,' says the teacher, or the hearer of the school,—for she rather listened to, than instructed her pupils. 'Get so far for the next lesson.' The child bows, whirls on his heel, and trips to his seat, mightily satisfied excepting with that one failure of memory, when that thundering word conjunction refused to come at his will. But that word he never forgot again. The failure fastened it in his memory for ever. This sea-green boy was myself, the present historian of the scene.

My next lesson lagged a little: my third seemed quite dull; my fourth I was two days in getting; and at the end of a week, I thought that I could get along through the world very well without grammar, as my grandfather had done before me.

But my mistress did not agree with me, and I was forced to go on. I contrived however to make easy work of the study. I got frequent but very short lessons, only a single sentence at a time. This was easily committed to memory, and would stay on it till I could run up and toss it off in recitation, after which it did not trouble me more. The recollection of it puts me in mind of a little boy lugging in wood, a stick at a time. My teacher was so ignorant of the philosophy of mind, that she did not know that this was not as good a way as any, and indeed she praised me for my smartness. The consequence was, that after I had been through the book, I could scarcely have repeated ten lines of it, excepting the very first and the very last lessons. Had it been ideas instead of words that had thus escaped from my mind, the case would have been different; as it was, the only matter of regret was, that I had been forming a bad habit, and had imbibed an erroneous notion, to wit, that lessons were to be learned simply to be recited.

The next winter this accidence was committed, not to memory, but to oblivion; but on presenting it to the master the first day of the school, he told me it was old-fashioned and out of date. and I must have Murray's Abridgment. So Murray was purchased, and I commenced the study of grammar again, excited by the novelty of a new, and clean, and larger book. But this soon became even more dull and dry than its predecessor, for it was more than twice the size, and the end of it was at the most discouraging distance of months if not of years.

I got only half way through the verb this winter. The next summer I began the book again, and arrived at the end of the account of the parts of speech. The winter after, I went over the same ground again, and got through the rules of syntax, and felt that I had accomplished a great work. The next summer I reviewed the whole grammar, for the mistress thought it necessary to have its most practical and important parts firmly fixed in the memory, before attempting the higher exercises of the study. On the third winter I began to apply my supposed knowledge in the process of *passing*, as it was termed by the master. The very pronunciation of this word shows how little the teacher exercised the power of independent thought. He had been accustomed to hear parse called *pass*, and although the least reflection would have told him it was not correct, that reflection came not, and for years the grammarians of our district school *passed*. However, it was rightly so called. It *was* passing, as said exercise was performed; passing over, by, around, away from the science of grammar, without coming near it, or at least without entering into it with much understanding of its nature. Mood, tense, case, government and agreement were ever flying from our tongues, to be sure, but their meaning was as much a mystery as the hocus pocus of a juggler.

At first we parsed in simple prose, but soon entered on poetry. Poetry—a thing which, to our apprehension, differed from prose in this only, that each line began with a capital letter, and ended

usually with a word sounding like another word at the end of the adjoining line. But unskilled as we all generally were in the art of parsing, some of us came to think ourselves wonderfully acute and dexterous nevertheless. When we perceived the master himself to be in doubt and perplexity, then we felt ourselves on a level with him, and ventured to oppose our *guess* to his. And if he appeared a dunce extraordinary, as was sometimes the case, we used to put ourselves into the *potential* mood pretty often, as we knew that our teacher could never assume the *imperative* on this subject.

The fact is, neither we nor the teacher entered into the writer's meaning. The general plan of the work was not surveyed, nor the particular sense of separate passages examined. *We* could not do it, perhaps, from the want of maturity of mind; the teacher did not, because he had never been accustomed to anything of the kind in his own education. And it never occurred to him that he could deviate from the track, or improve upon the methods of those who taught him. Pope's Essay on Man was the parsing manual used by the most advanced. No wonder then, that pupil and pedagogue so often got bewildered and lost in a world of thought like this; for however well ordered a creation it might be, it was scarcely better than chaos to them.

In closing, I ought to remark, that all our teachers were not thus ignorant of grammar; although they did not perhaps take the best way to teach it. In speaking thus of this department of study, and

also of others, I have reference to the more general character of school-masters and schools.

I have given some account of my first winter at school. Of my second, third, and fourth, I have nothing of importance to say. The routine was the same in each; the teachers were remarkable for nothing in particular; if they were, I have too indistinct a remembrance of their character to pourtray them now; so I will pass them by, and describe the teacher of my fifth.

He was called the *particular* master. The scholars, in speaking of him, would say, 'he is so particular.' The first morning of the school, he read to us a long list of regulations to be observed, in school, and out. 'There are more rules than you could shake a stick at before your arm would ache,' said some one. 'And if the master should shake a stick at every one who should disobey them, he would not find time to do much else,' said another. Indeed it proved to be so. Half the time was spent in calling up scholars for little misdemeanours, trying to make them confess their faults, and promise stricter obedience, or in devising punishments and inflicting them. Almost every method was tried that was ever suggested to the brain of pedagogue. Some were feruled on the hand; some were whipped with a rod on the back; some were compelled to hold out at arm's length, the largest book that could be found, or a great leaden inkstand, till muscle and nerve, bone and marrow were tortured with the continued exertion. If the

arm bent or inclined from the horizontal level, it was forced back again by a knock of the ruler on the elbow. I well recollect that one poor fellow forgot his suffering by fainting quite away. This lingering punishment was more befitting the vengeance of a savage, than the corrective efforts of a teacher of the young in civilized life.

He had recourse to another method almost, perhaps quite as barbarous. It was standing in a stooping posture, with the finger on the head of a nail in the floor. It was a position not particularly favourable to health of body, or soundness of mind; the head being brought about as low as the knees, the blood rushing to it and pressing unnaturally on the veins, causing a dull pain, and a staggering dizziness. That man's judgment, or mercy, must have been topsy turvy also, who first set the example of such an infliction on those whose progress in knowledge depended somewhat on their being kept right end upward.

The above punishments were sometimes rendered doubly painful by their taking place directly in front of the enormous fire, so that the pitiable culprit was roasted as well as racked. Another mode of punishment—an anti-whispering process, was setting the jaws at a painful distance apart, by inserting a chip perpendicularly between the teeth. Then we occasionally had our hair pulled, our noses tweaked, our ears pinched and boxed, or snapped perhaps with India rubber—this last the perfection of ear-tingling operations. There were minor penalties moreover for minor faults. The uneasy urchins were clapped

into the closet, thrust under the desk, or perched on its top. Boys were made to sit in the girls' seats, amusing the school with their grinning awkwardness. And girls were obliged to sit on the masculine side of the aisle, with crimsoning necks, and faces buried in their aprons.

But I have dwelt long enough on the various penalties of the numerous violations of master Particular's many orders. After all, he did not keep an orderly school. The cause of the mischief was, he was variable. He wanted that persevering firmness and uniformity which alone can insure success. He had so many regulations that he could not stop at all times to notice the transgressions of them. The scholar not knowing with certainty what to expect, often dared to run the risk of disobedience. The consequence of this procedure on the part of the ruler and the ruled was, that the school became uncommonly riotous before the close of the season. The larger scholars soon broke through all restraint, but the little ones were narrowly watched and restricted somewhat longer. But these gradually grew unmindful of the unstable authority, and finally contemned it with almost insolent effrontery, unless the master's temper-kindled eye was fixed directly and menacingly upon them. Thus the many regulations were like so many cobwebs, through which the great flies would break at once, and so tear and disorder the net that it would not hold even the little ones, or at all answer the purpose for which it was spun.

I would not have it understood that this master

was singular in his punishments; for such methods of correcting offenders have been in use time out of mind. He was distinguished only for resorting to them more frequently than any other instructor within my own observation. The truth is, that it seemed to be the prevailing opinion among both teachers and parents, that boys and girls *would* play and be mischievous at any rate, and that consequently masters *must* punish in some way or other. It was a matter of course; nothing better was expected.

In this description of the District School as it *was*, that frequent and important exercise, Reading, must not be omitted—Reading, as it *was*. Advance then, ye readers of the old school-house, and let us witness your performances.

We will suppose it the first day of the school. 'Come and read,' says the mistress to a little flaxen-headed creature of doubtful gender, for the child is in petticoats and sits on the female side as close as possible to a guardian sister. But then those coarser features, tanned complexion, and close-clipped hair, with other minutiæ of aspect, are somewhat contradictory to the feminine dress. 'Come and read.' It is the first time that this he-or-she was ever inside of a school-house, and in the presence of a school-ma'am, according to recollection, and the order is heard with shrinking timidity. But the sister whispers an encouraging word, and helps 'tot' down from the seat, who creeps out into the aisle and hesitates along down to

the teacher biting his fingers, or scratching his head, perhaps both, to relieve the embarrassment of the novel situation. 'What is your name, dear?' '*Tholomon Icherthon,*' lisps the now discovered *he,* in a phlegm-choked voice scarce above a whisper. 'Put your hands down by your side, Solomon, and make a bow.' He obeys, if a short and hasty jerk of the head is a bow. The alphabetical page of the spelling-book is presented, and he is asked, 'What's that?' But he cannot tell. He is but two years and a half old, and has been sent to school to relieve his mother from trouble rather than to learn. No one at home has yet shown or named a letter to him. He has never had even that celebrated character, round O, pointed out to his notice. It was an older beginner, most probably, who being asked a similar question about the first letter of the alphabet, replied, 'I know him by sight, but can't call him by name.' But our namesake of the Wise man, does not know the gentleman even by sight, nor any of his twenty-five companions.

Solomon Richardson has at length said A, B, C, for the first time in his life. He has *read.* 'That's a nice boy; make another bow and go to your seat.' He gives another jerk of the head and whirls on his heel and trots back to his seat, meeting the congratulatory smile of his sister with a satisfied grin, which, put into language would be, 'There, I've read, ha'n't I?'

The little chit, at first so timid and almost inaudible in enunciation, in a few days becomes accustomed to the place and the exercise; and in

obedience to the 'speak up loud, that's a good boy,' he soon pipes off A-er, B-er, C-er, &c. with a far-ringing shrillness, that vies even with Chanticleer himself. Solomon went all the pleasant days of the first summer, and nearly every day of the next, before he knew all his letters by sight or could call them by name. Strange that it should take so long to become acquainted with these twenty-six characters, when in a month's time the same child becomes familiar with the forms and the names of hundreds of objects in nature around, or in use about his father's house, shop or farm! Not so very strange neither, if we only reflect a moment. Take a child into a party of twenty-six persons, all strangers, and lead him from one to the other as fast as his little feet can patter, telling him their respective names, all in less than ten minutes; do this four times a day even, and you would not be surprised if he should be weeks at least, if not months, in learning to designate them all by their names. Is it any matter of surprise then that the child should be so long in becoming acquainted with the alphabetical party, when he is introduced to them precisely in the manner above described? Then these are not of different heights, complexions, dresses, motions, and tones of voice, as a living company have. But there they stand in an unalterable line, all in the same complexions and dress, all just so tall, just so motionless, and mute, and uninteresting, and of course the most unrememberable figures in the world. No wonder that some should go to school and 'sit on a bench

and say A B C,' as a little girl said, for a whole year, and still find themselves strangers to some of the sable company even then. Our little reader is permitted at length to turn a leaf, and he finds himself in the region of the Abs—an expanse of little syllables which makes any one given to comparisons, think of an extensive plain whereon there is no tree, or shrub, or plant, or any thing else inviting to the eye, and nothing but little stones, stones, stones, all about the same size. And what must the poor little learner do here? Why, he must hop from cobble to cobble, if I may so call ab, eb, ib, &c. as fast as he possibly can, naming each one after the voice of the teacher as he hurries along. And this must be kept up until he can denominate each lifeless and uninteresting object on the face of the desert.

After more or less months the weary novice ceases to be an Ab-ite. He is next put into whole words of one syllable, arranged in columns. The first word we read in Perry that conveyed anything like an idea, was the first one in the first column. The word Ache—ay, we did not easily forget what this meant when once informed, the corresponding idea, or rather feeling, was so often in our consciousness. Ache—a very appropriate term with which to begin a course of education so abounding in pains of body and of mind.

After five pages of this perpendicular reading, if we may so call it, we entered on the horizontal, that is, on words arranged in sentences and paragraphs. This was reading in good earnest, as grown

up folks did, and something with which tiny childhood would be very naturally puffed up. 'Easy Lessons' was the title of about a dozen separate chapters scattered at intervals among the numerous spelling columns, like bramble-copses here and there amid the tall forest. Easy lessons, because they consisted mostly of little monosyllabic words easy to be pronounced. But they were not easy as it regards being understood. They were made up of abstract moral sentences, presenting but a very faint meaning to the child, if any at all. Their particular application to his own conduct he would not perceive of course without help, and this it scarcely ever entered the head or the heart of the teacher to afford.

In the course of summers, how many I forget, we arrived at the most manly and dignified reading, which the illustrious Perry had prepared for us. It was entitled 'Moral Tales and Fables.' In these latter, beasts and birds talked like men; and strange sort of folks called Jupiter, Mercury, and Juno, were pictured as sitting up in the clouds and talking with men and animals on earth, or as down among them doing very unearthly things. To quote language in common use, we *kind o'believed it all to be true, and yet we kind o'didn't.* As for the moral at the end, teachers never dreamed of attracting our attention to it. Indeed we had no other idea of all these Easy Lessons, Tales and Fables, than that they were to be syllabled from the tongue in the task of reading. That they were to sink into the heart

and make us better in life, never occurred to our simple understandings.

Among all the rest were five pieces of poetry—charming stuff to read, the words would come along one after another so easily, and the lines would jingle so pleasantly together at the end, tickling the ear like two beads in a rattle. O give us poetry to read, of all things, we thought.

We generally passed directly from the spelling-book to the reading-book of the first class, although we were ranked the second class still. Or perhaps we took a book which had been formerly used by the first class, for a new reading book was generally introduced once in a few years in compliance with the earnest recommendation of the temporary teacher. While the first class were in Scott's Lessons, we of the second were pursuing their tracks, not altogether understandingly, through Adams' 'Understanding Reader.' When a new master persuaded them into Murray, then we were admitted into Scott.

The principal requisites in reading in those days were to read fast, mind the 'stops and marks,' and speak up loud. As for suiting the tone to the meaning, no such thing was dreamed of, in our school at least. As much emphasis was laid on an insignificant *of*, or *and*, as on the most important word in the piece. But no wonder we did not know how to vary our tones, for we did not always know the meaning of the words, or enter into the general spirit of the composition. This was very frequently, indeed almost always, the case with the

majority even of the first class. Parliamentary prose and Miltonic verse were just about as good as Greek for the purpose of modulating the voice according to meaning. It scarcely ever entered the heads of our teachers to question us about the ideas hidden in the great long words and spacious sentences. It is possible that they did not always discover it themselves. 'Speak up there, and don't read like a mouse in a cheese; and mind your stops,' —such were the principal directions respecting the important art of elocution. Important it was most certainly considered, for each class must read twice in the forenoon, and the same in the afternoon, from a quarter to half an hour each time, according to the size of the class. Had they read but once or twice, and but little at a time, and this with a just and profitable attention to tone and sense, parents would have thought the master most miserably deficient in duty, and their children cheated out of their rights, notwithstanding the time thus saved should have been most assiduously devoted to other all-important branches of education.

It ought not to be omitted that the Bible, particularly the New Testament, was the reading twice a day generally, for all the classes adequate to words of more than one syllable. It was the only reading of several of the younger classes under some teachers. On this practice I shall make but a single remark. As far as my own experience and observation extended, reverence for the sacred volume was not deepened by this constant but exceedingly careless use.

But what a long, and perhaps tedious detail on this subject of reading! I had no idea of it when I began. Yet I have not put down the half that I could. These early impressions when once started from their recesses, how they will teem forth!

There, the class have read; but they have something else to do before they take their seats. 'Shut your books,' says he who has been *hearing* them read. What makes this row of little countenances brighten up so suddenly, especially the upper end of it? What wooden faces and leaden eyes, two minutes ago! The reading was nothing to them—those Select sentences and Maxims in Perry's spelling-book which are tucked in between the fables. It is all as dull as a dirge to those life-loving boys and girls. They almost drowsed while they stood up in their places. But they are fully awake now. They are going to spell. But this in itself is the driest exercise to prepare for, and the driest to perform, of the whole round. The child cares no more in his heart about the arrangement of vowels and consonants in the orthography of words, than he does how many chips lie one above another at the schoolhouse wood-pile. But he does care, whether he is at the head or foot of his class; whether the medal dangles from his own neck or another's. This is the secret of the interest in spelling. Emulation is awakened, ambition roused. There is something like the tug of strength in the wrestle, something of the alternation of hope and fear in a game of chance. There has been a special preparation for

the trial. Observe this class any day half an hour before they are called up to read. What a flitting from top to bottom of the spelling column: and what a flutter of lips and hissing of utterance. Now the eye twinkles on the page to catch a word, and now it is fixed on the empty air while the orthography is syllabled over and over again in mind, until at length it is syllabled on the memory. But the time of trial has come; they have only to read first. 'The third class may come and read.' 'O dear, I hav'n't got my spelling lesson,' mutters Charlotte to herself. She has just begun the art of writing this winter, and she lingered a little too long at her hooks and trammels. The lesson seems to her to have as many again hard words in it as common. What a fluster she is in. She got up above George in the forenoon, and she would not fall behind again for any thing. She is as slow in coming from her seat as she possibly can be, to keep moving. She makes a opening in her book with her finger, and every now and then during the reading exercise, steals a glance at a difficult word.

But the reading is over, and what a brightening up, as was said before, with the exception perhaps of two or three idle or stupid boys at that less honourable extremity of the class called the foot. That boy at the head—no, it *was* a boy, but Harriet has at length got above him, and when girls once get to the head, get them away from it if you can. Once put the 'pride of place' into their hearts, and how they will queen it. Then they are more sensi-

tive regarding any thing that might lower them in the eyes of others, and seem the least like disgrace. I have known a little girl to cry the half of one day, and look melancholy the whole of the next, on losing her place at the head. Girls are very likely to arrive at, and keep the first place in the class, in consequence of a little more help from mother nature than boys get. I believe that they generally have a memory more fitted for catching and holding words and other signs addressed to the eye, than the other sex. That girl at the head has studied her spelling lesson until she is as confident of every word as the unerring Perry himself. She can spell every word in the column in the order it stands without the master's 'putting it out,' she has been over it so many times. Now, Mr. James, get up again if you can, thinks Harriet. I pity you, poor girl, for James has an ally that will blow all your proud castle into the air. Old Boreas, the king of the winds, will order out a snow-storm by and bye to block up the roads, so that none but booted and weather-proof boys can get to school, and you, Miss, must lose a day or two, and then find yourself at the foot, with those block-head boys who always abide there. But let it not be thought that all those foot lads are deficient in intellect. Look at them when the master's back is turned, and you will see mischievous ingenuity enough to convince you that they might surpass even James and Harriet, had some other faculties been called into exercise besides the mere memory of verbalities.

The most extraordinary spelling, and indeed

reading machine in our school was a boy whom I shall call Memorus Wordwell. He was mighty and wonderful in the acquisition and remembrance of words—of signs without the ideas signified. The alphabet he acquired at home before he was two years old. What exultation of parents, what exclamation from admiring visitors. 'There was never any thing like it!' He had almost accomplished his Abs before he was thought old enough for school. At an earlier age than usual, however he was sent, and then he went from Ache to Abomination in half the summers and winters it took the rest of us to go over the same space. It was astonishing how quickly he mastered column after column, section after section of obstinate orthographies. Those martial terms I have just used, together with our hero's celerity, put me in mind of Cæsar. So I will quote him. Memorus might have said in respect to the hosts of the spelling-book, 'I came, I saw, I conquered.' He generally stood at the head of a class, each one of whom was two years his elder. Poor creatures, they studied hard some of them, but it did no good; Memorus Wordwell was born to be above them, as some men are said to have been 'born to command.' At the public examination of his first winter, the people of the district, and even the minister, thought it marvellous that such monstrous great words should be mastered by 'such a leetle mite of a boy!' Memorus was mighty also in saying those after spelling matters, the Key, the Abbreviations, the Punctuation, &c. These things were deemed of great account to be laid up in remembrance,

although they were all very imperfectly understood, and some of them not understood at all.

Punctuation—how many hours, days, and even weeks, have I tugged away to lift, as it were, to roll up into the store-house of my memory, the many long, heavy sentences comprehended under this title. Only survey (we use this word when speaking of considerable space and bulk,) only survey the first sentence, a transcript of which I will endeavour to locate in these narrow bounds. I would have my readers of the rising generation know what mighty labours we little creatures of five, six, and seven years old, were set to perform.

'Punctuation is the art of pointing, or of dividing a discourse into periods by points, expressing the pauses to be made in the reading thereof, and regulating the cadence or elevation of the voice.'

There! I have laboured for weeks on that, for I always had that lamentable defect of mind, not to be able to commit to memory what I did not understand. My teachers never aided me with the least explanation of the above copied sentence, nor of other reading of a similar character, which was likewise to be committed to memory. But all this was nothing, as it were, to Memorus Wordwell. He was a very Hercules in this wilderness of words.

Master Wordwell was a remarkable reader too. He could rattle off a word as extensive as the name of a Russian noble, when he was but five years old, as easily as the schoolmaster himself. 'He can read in the hardest chapters of the Testament as fast again as I can,' said his mother. 'I never did

see nothing beat it,' exclaimed his father, 'he speaks up as loud as a minister.' But I have said enough about this prodigy. I have said thus much, because that although he was thought so surpassingly bright, he was the most decided ninny in the school. The fact is, he did not know what the sounds he uttered meant. It never entered his head, nor the heads of his parents, or of most of his teachers, that words and sentences were written, and should be read, only to be understood. He lost some of his reputation, however, when he grew up toward twenty-one, and it was found that *numbers*, in more senses than one, were far above him in arithmetic.

One little anecdote about Memorus Wordwell before we let him go, and this long digression shall be no longer.

It happened one day that the 'cut and split' for the fire fell short, and Jonas Patch was out wielding the axe in school-time. He had been out at work about half an hour, when Memorus, who was perceived to have less to do than the rest, was sent out to take his place. He was about ten years old, and four years younger than Jonas. 'Memorus, you may go out and spell[1] Jonas.' Our hero did not think of the Yankee sense in which the master used the word spell, indeed he had never attached but one meaning to it, whenever it was used with reference to himself. He supposed the master was granting him a ride extraordinary on his favourite hobby. So he put his spelling-book under his arm,

[1] Take a *spell* at his job.

and was out at the wood-pile with the speed of a boy rushing to play.

'Ye've got yer spellin lesson, Jonas?' was his first salutation. 'Haven't looked at it yet,' was the reply. 'I mean to cut up this plaguy great log, spellin or no spellin, before I go in. I had as lieve keep warm here chopin wood, as freeze up there in that tarnal cold back seat.' 'Well, the master sent me out to hear you spell.' 'Did he? well, put out the words, and I'll spell.' Memorus being so distinguished a speller, Jonas did not doubt but that he was really sent out on this errand. So our deputy spelling-master mounted the top of the wood-pile, just in front of Jonas, to put out words to his temporary pupil, who still kept on putting out chips.

'Do you know where the lesson begins, Jonas?' 'No, I don't, but I spose I shall find out now.' 'Well, here 'tis.' (They both belonged to the same class.) 'Spell A-bom-i-na-tion.' Jonas spells. A-b-o-m bom a-bom (in the mean time up goes the axe high in air,) i a-bomi (down it goes again into the wood) n-a na a-bom-i-na (up it goes again) t-i-o-n tion, a-bom-i-na-tion;—chuck the axe goes again, and at the same time out flies a furious chip and hits Memorus on the nose. At this moment the master appeared just at the corner of the schoolhouse, with one foot still on the threshold. 'Jonas, why don't you come in? didn't I send Memorus out to spell you?' 'Yes sir, and he has been spelling me, how could I come in if he spelt me here?' At this the master's eye caught Memorus perched upon

the top of the sticks, with his book open upon his lap, rubbing his nose, and just in the act of putting out the next word of the column. Ac-com-mo-da-tion, pronounced Memorus in a broken but louder voice than before, for he caught a glimpse of the master, and he wished to let him know that he was doing his duty. This was too much for the master's gravity. He perceived the mistake, and without saying more, wheeled back into the school-room, almost bursting with the most tumultuous laugh he ever tried to suppress. The scholars wondered at his looks, and grinned in sympathy. But in a few minutes Jonas came in, followed by Memorus with his spelling-book, who exclaimed, 'I have heard him spell clean through the whole lesson, and he didn't spell hardly none of 'em right.' The master could hold in no longer, and the scholars perceived the blunder, and there was one simultaneous roar from pedagogue and pupils; the scholars laughing twice as loud and uproariously in consequence of being permitted to laugh in school-time, and to do it with the accompaniment of the master.

Now comes winter, the sixth of my district education. Our master was as insignificant a personage as is often met with beyond the age of twenty-one. He ought to have been pedagogue in that land of littleness, Lilliput. Our great fellows of the back seat might have tossed him out of the window from the palm of the hand. But he possessed certain qualifications, and pursued such a course that he was permitted to retain the magisterial seat

through his term, and indeed was quite popular on the whole.

He was as remarkable for the loudness and compass of his voice, as for the diminutiveness of his material dimensions. How such a body of sound could proceed from so bodiless an existence, was a marvel. It seemed as unnatural as that a tremendous thunder-clap should burst from a speck of cloud in the sky. He generally sat with the singers on the sabbath, and drowned the feebler voices with the inundation of his base.

But it was not with his tuneful powers alone that he 'astonished the natives.' He was imagined to possess great gifts of oratory likewise. 'What a pity it is that he had not been a minister,' it was said. It was by his endowments and taste in this respect that he made himself particularly memorable in our school. Mr. Spoutsound had been one quarter to an academy where declamation was a weekly exercise. Finding in this ample scope for his vocal extraordinariness, (a long-winded word, to be sure, but so appropriate,) he became an enthusiastic votary of the Ciceronian art. The principal qualification of an orator in his view, was height, depth, and breadth of utterance—quantity of sound. Of course he fancied himself a very lion in oratory; indeed, as far as roaring would go, he was a lion. This gentleman introduced declamation, or the speaking of pieces, as it was called, into our school. He considered 'speaking of the utmost consequence in this country, as any boy might be called to a seat in the legislature perhaps, in the course of things.' It

was a novelty to the scholars, and they entered with their whole souls into the matter. It was a pleasant relief to the dulness of the old-fashioned routine.

What a rummaging of books, pamphlets, and newspapers now took place, to find pieces to speak. The American Preceptor, the Columbian Orator, the Art of Reading, Webster's Third Part, and I know not how many other ancients were taken down from their dusty retirement at home for the sake of the specimens of eloquence they afforded. Those pieces were deemed best by us grandsons of the Revolutionists which most abounded in those glorious words, Freedom, Liberty, Independence, and other spirit-kindling names and phrases that might be mentioned. Another recommendation was high-flown language, and especially words that were long and sonorous, such as would roll thunderingly from the tongue. For like our district professor, we had the impression that noise was the most important quality in eloquence. The first, the second, and the third requisite was the same; it was noise, noise, noise. Action, however, or gesticulation, was not omitted. This was considered the next qualification of the good orator. So there was the most vehement swinging of arms, shaking of fists, and waving of palms. That occasional motion of the limb and force of voice, called emphasis, was not a characteristic of our elocution, or rather it was all emphasis. Our utterance was something like the continuous roar of a swoln brook over a mill-dam, and our action like the unintermitted whirling and clapping of machinery.

We tried our talent in the dramatic way likewise. There were numerous extracts from dramatic compositions scattered through the various reading books we had mustered. These dialogistic performances were even more interesting than our speechifying in the semblance of lawyers and legislators. We more easily acquired an aptitude for this exercise, as it was somewhat like that every day affair, conversation. In this we were brought face to face, voice to voice, with each other, and our social sympathies were kindled into glow. We talked with, as well as at folks. Then the female portion of the school could take a part in the performance; and who does not know that dialoguing, as well as dancing, has twice the zest with a female partner. The whole school, with the exception of the very least, perhaps, were engaged, indeed absorbed in this novel branch of education introduced by Mr. Spoutsound. Some who had not got out of their Abs were taught by admiring fathers and mothers at home, little pieces by rote, and made to screech them out with a most ear-splitting execution. One lad in this way committed to memory that famous piece of self-puffery, beginning with the lines—

> 'You'd scarce expect one of my age,
> To speak in public on the stage.'

Memorus Wordwell committed to memory, and parrotted forth, that famous speech of Pitt, in which he so eloquently replies to the charge of being a young man.

Cicero at Athens, was not more assiduous in seek-

ing the immense and the infinite in eloquence, than we were in seeking the great in speaking. Besides half an hour of daily school time set apart for the exercise under the immediate direction and exemplification of the master, our noonings were devoted to the same, as far as the ruling passion of the young, the love of play, would permit. And on the way to and from school, the pleasure of dialogue would compete with that of dowsing each other into the snow. We even 'spoke' while doing our night and morning work at home. A boy might be seen at the wood-pile hacking at a log and a dialogue by turns. Or, perhaps, after dispensing the fodder to the tenants of the barn, he would mount a half cleared scaffold, and out-bellow the wondering beeves below.

As the school drew towards a close, Mr. Spoutsound proposed to have an exhibition in addition to the usual examination on the last day, or rather the evening of it. Our oratorical gifts and accomplishments must be publicly displayed; which is next to publicly using them in the important affairs of the town, the state, or the country.

'An Exhibition—I want to know! can it be?' There had never been anything like it in the district before—nor indeed in the town. Such a thing had scarcely been heard of, except by some one whose uncle or cousin had been to the academy, or to college. The people of the district were wide awake. The younger portion of them could hardly sleep of nights.

The scholars were requested to select the pieces

they would prefer to speak, whether speeches or dialogues; and to arrange among themselves who should be fellow-partners in the dramatical performances. The master, however, retained the right of veto on their choice. Now what a rustle of leaves and flutter of lips in school hours, and noisier flapping of books and clatter of tongues at noon, in settling who shall have which, and who speak with whom. At length all is arranged, and mostly to the satisfaction of all. Then for a week or two before the final consummation of things eloquent, it was nothing but rehearsal. No pains were spared by any one that he might be perfect in the recollection and flourishing off of his part. Dialogists were grouped together in every corner. There was a buzz in the back seat, a hum in the closet, a screech in the entry, and the very climax of vociferation in the spelling-floor. Here the solos (if I may borrow a term from music) were rehearsed under the immediate criticism of Mr. Spoutsound, whose chief delight was in forensic and parliamentary eloquence. The old school-house was a little Babel in the confusion of tongues.

The expected day at length arrives. There must be of course the usual examination in the afternoon. But nobody attended this but the minister and the committee who engaged the master. The people of the district all intended to be at the exhibition in the evening, and examination was 'just nothing at all' with that in prospect. And in fact it *was* just nothing at all, for the 'ruling passion' had swallowed up very much of the time that should have

been devoted to the really important branches of education.

After the finishing of the school, a stage was erected at the end of the spelling floor next to the desk and the closet. It was hung round with checked bed-blankets in the semblance of theatrical curtains, to conceal any preparations that might be necessary between the pieces.

The exhibition was to commence at half-past six. Before that time the old school-house was crowded to the utmost of its capacity for containing, by the people, not only of our district, but of other parts of the town. The children were wedged into chinks too narrow for the admission of the grown-up. Never were a multitude of living bodies more completely compressed and amalgamated into one continuous mass.

On the front writing-bench, just before the stage, and facing the audience, sat the four first, and some of the most interesting performers on the occasion, viz. players on a clarionet, violin, bass-viol, and bassoon. But they of the bow were sorely troubled at first. Time and space go together with them, you know. They cannot keep the first, without possessing the latter. As they sat, their semibreves were all shortened into minims, indeed into crotchets, for lack of elbow room. At length the violinist stood up straight on the writing bench so as to have an unimpeded stretch in the empty air above the thicket of heads. His fellow-sufferer then contrived to stand so that his long bow could sweep freely between the steady heads of two broad-

shouldered men, out of danger from joggling boys. This band discoursed what was to our ears most eloquent music, as a prelude to the musical eloquence which was to be the chief entertainment of the occasion. They played intermediately also, and gave the winding-up flourish of sound.

At forty minutes past six the curtain rose—that is, the bed-blankets were pulled aside. There stood Mr. Spoutsound on the stage, in all the pomp possible to diminutiveness. He advanced two steps, and bowed as profoundly from height to depth, as his brevity of stature would admit. He then opened the exhibition, by speaking a poetical piece called a prologue, which he found in one of the old reading books. As this was originally composed as an introduction to a stage performance, it was thought appropriate on this occasion. Mr. Spoutsound now put forth all the plenitude of his utterance. It seemed a vocal cataract, all torrent, thunder, and froth; but it wanted room—an abyss to empty into, and all it had was the remnant of space left in our little school-room. A few of the audience were overwhelmed with the torrent, and rush, and roar of the pent up noise, and the rest, with admiration, yea, astonishment, that the schoolmaster '*could speak so.*'

He ceased; it was all as still as if every other voice had died of envy. He bowed; there was then a general breathing, as if the vocals were just coming to life again. He sat down on a chair placed on the stage, then there was one general buzz, above which arose here and there a living and loud voice. Above this soon arose the exaltation

of the orator's favourite march; for he deemed it proper that his own performance should be separated from those of his pupils by some length and loftiness of music.

Now the exhibition commenced in good earnest. The dramatists were dressed in costumes according to the character to be sustained, as far as all the old and odd dresses that could be mustered up, would enable them to do so. The district, and indeed the town, had been ransacked for revolutionary coats and cocked-up hats, and other grand-fatherly and grand-motherly attire. The people present were quite as much amused with the spectacle, as with the speaking. To see the old fashions on the young folks, and to see the young folks personating characters so entirely opposite to their own; for instance, the slim pale-faced youth, by the aid of stuffing, looking and acting the fat old wine-bibber; the blooming girl of seventeen putting on the cap, the kerchief, and the character of seventy-five, &c. all this was ludicrously strange. A very refined taste might have observed other things that were strangely ludicrous in the elocution and gesticulation of these disciples of Mr. Spoutsound, but most of the company present were so fortunate as to perceive no bad taste to mar their enjoyment.

The little boy of five spoke the little piece—

'You'd scarce expect one of my age, &c.'

I recollect another line of the piece which has become singularly verified in the history of the lad. It is this—

'Tall oaks from little acorns grow.'

Now this acorn of eloquence which sprouted forth so vigorously on this occasion, has at length grown into a mighty oak of oratory on his native hills. He has flourished in a Fourth of July oration before his fellow-townsmen.

Memorus Wordwell, who at this time was six years old, yelped forth the aforementioned speech of Pitt. In the part replying to the taunt that the author of the speech was a young man, Memorus 'beat all.' Next to the master himself, he excited the greatest admiration, and particularly in his father and mother.

But this chapter must be ended, so we will skip to the end of this famous exhibition. At a quarter past ten the curtain dropped for the last time—that is, the bed-blankets were pulled down and put into the sleighs of their owners, to be carried home to be spread over the dreamers of acts, instead of being hung before the actors of dreams. The little boys and girls did not get to bed till eleven o'clock that night, nor all of them to sleep till twelve. They were never more the pupils of Mr. Spoutsound; he soon migrated to one of the states beyond the Alleghany. There he studied law not more than a year certainly, and was admitted to the bar. It is rumoured that he soon *spoke* himself into the legislature, and as soon spoke himself out again. Whether he will speak himself into congress is a matter of exceeding doubt. I have nothing more to add respecting the speaking, or the speaking master, excepting that one shrewd old man was heard to say on leaving the

school-house on exhibition night, ‘ A great *cry*, but little wool.’

The winter I was nine years old, I made another advance toward the top of the ladder, in the circumstance of learning to write. I desired and pleaded to commence the chirographical art in the summer, and indeed the winter before, for others of my own age were at it thus early. But my father said that my fingers were hardly stout enough to manage a quill from his geese, but that if I would put up with the quill of a hen, I might try. This pithy satire put an end to my teasing.

Having previously had the promise of writing this winter, I had made all the necessary preparations days before school was to begin. I had bought me a new birch ruler, and had given four cents, a third of my wealth, for it. To this I had appended, by a well-twisted flaxen string, a plummet of my own running, whittling, and scraping. I had hunted up an old pewter inkstand, which had come down from the ancestral eminence of my great grandfather, for aught I knew. And it bore many marks of a speedier and less honourable descent, to wit, from table or desk to the floor. I had succeeded in becoming the owner of a penknife, not that it was likely to be applied to its appropriate use that winter at least, for such beginners generally used the instrument to mar the *pens* they wrote *in*, rather than to make or mend those they wrote *with*. I had selected one of the fairest quills out of an enormous bunch. Half a quire of foolscap had

been folded into the shape of a writing book, by the maternal hand, and covered with brown paper nearly as thick as a sheep-skin.

Behold me now, on the first Monday in December, starting for school, with my new and clean writing-book buttoned under my jacket, my inkstand in my pocket, a bundle of necessary books in one hand, and my ruler and plummet in the other, which I flourished in the air and round my head till the sharpened lead made its first mark on my own face. My long white-feathered goose-quill was twisted into my hat-band like a plumy badge of the distinction to which I had arrived, and of the important enterprise before me.

On arriving at the school-house I took a seat higher up and more honourable than the one I occupied the winter before. At the proper time my writing-book, which, with my quill I had handed to the master on entering, was returned to me, with a copy set, and paper ruled and pen made. My copy was a single straight mark, at the first corner of my manuscript. A straight mark! who could not make so simple a thing as that, thought I. I waited however to see how the boy next to me, a beginner also, should succeed, as he had got ready a moment before me. Never shall I forget the first chirographical exploit of this youth. That inky image will never be eradicated from my memory so long as a single trace of early experience is left on its tablet. The fact is, it was an era in my life;—something great was to be done;—and my attention was intensely awake to whatever had a bearing on this new and

important trial of my powers. I looked to see a mark as straight as a ruler, having its four corners as distinctly defined as the angles of a parallelogram. But, O me, what a spectacle! What a shocking contrast to my anticipation. That mark had as many crooks as a ribbon in the wind, and nearer eight angles than four; and its two sides were nearly as rough and as notched as a fine handsaw, and indeed the mark somewhat resembled it in width, for the fellow had laid in a store of ink sufficient to last the journey of the whole line. 'Shame on him,' said I internally, 'I can beat that, I know.' I began by setting my pen firmly on the paper, and I brought a mark half way down, with rectilinear precision. But by this time my head began to swim, and my hand to tremble. I was as it were in vacancy, far below the upper ruling, and as far above the lower. My self-possession failed, my pen diverged to the right, then to the left, crooking all the remainder of its way, with as many zigzags as could well be in so short a distance. Mine was as sad a failure as my neighbour's. I covered it over with my fingers, and did not jog him with a 'see there!' as I had vainly anticipated.

So much for pains-taking, now for chance. By good luck the next effort was quite successful. I now dashed on for better or worse, till in one half hour I had covered the whole page with the standing, though seemingly falling monuments of the chirographical wisdom of my teacher and skill of myself. In the afternoon a similar copy was set, and I dashed on again as if I had taken so much

writing by the job, and my only object was to save time. Now and then there was quite a reputable mark; but alas for him whose perception of the beautiful was particularly delicate, should he get a glimpse of these sloughs of ink.

The third morning my copy was the first element of the m and n, or what in burlesque is called a hook. On my fourth I had the last half of the same letters, or the trammel. And indeed they were the similitudes of hooks and trammels, forged in a country plenteous in iron, and by the youngest apprentice at the hammer and anvil.

In this way I went through all the small letters, as they are called. First, the elements, or constituent parts, then the whole character in which these parts were combined.

Then I must learn to make the capitals before entering on joining hand. Four pages were devoted to these. Capital letters! They were capital offences against all that is graceful, indeed decent, or even tolerable, in that art which is so capable of beautiful forms and proportions.

I came next to joining hand, about three weeks after my commencement. And joining hand indeed it was. It seemed as if my hooks and trammels were overheated in the forge, and were melted into each other, the shapeless masses so clung together at points where they ought to have been separate; so very far were they from all resemblance to conjoined yet distinct and well-defined characters.

Thus I went on, a perfect little prodigal in the expenditure of paper, ink, pens, and time. The first

winter I splashed two, and the next, three, writing books with inky puddle, in learning coarse hand. And after all I gained not much in penmanship, except a workmanlike assurance and celerity of execution, such as is natural to an old hand at the business.

The third winter I commenced small hand, or rather fine, as it is more technically denominated. Or rather a copy of half-way dimensions, that the change to fine running-hand might not be too sudden. From this dwarfish coarse or giant fine hand, just as you please to call it, I slid down to the genuine epistolary and mercantile, with a capital at the head of the line as much out of proportion as a corpulent old captain marching in single file before a parade of little boys.

Some of our teachers were accustomed to spend a few minutes forenoon and afternoon, in going round among the writers to see that they held the pen properly and took a decent degree of pains. But the majority of them, as far as my present recollections serve, never stirred from the desk to superintend this branch. There was something like an excuse, however, for not visiting their pupils while at the pen. Sitting as they did in those long, narrow, ricketty seats, one could hardly be got at without jogging two or three others, displacing a writing book, knocking over an inkstand, and making a great deal of rustle, rattle and racket.

Some of the teachers set the copies at home in the evening, but most set them in school. Six hours per day were all that custom required of a teacher,

of course half an hour at home spent in the matters of the school would have been time and labour not paid for, and a gratuity not particularly expected. On entering in the morning and looking for the master, as the object *at* which to make the customary 'manners,' we could perceive just the crown of his head behind a huge pile of manuscripts, which together with his copy-setting attention, prevented the bowed and courtesied respects from reaching his notice. A few of the most advanced in penmanship had copperplate slips, as they were called, tucked into their manuscripts for the trial of their more skilful hands. Or if an ordinary learner had for once done extraordinarily well, he was allowed a slip as a mark of merit, and a circumstance of encouragement. Sometimes when the master was pressed for time all the joining-handers were thus furnished. It was a pleasure to have copies of this sort, their polished shades, graceful curves, and delicate hair lines were so like a picture for the eye to dwell upon. But when we set about the work of imitation, discouragement took the place of pleasure. 'After all, give us the master's hand,' we thought, 'we can come up to that now and then.' We despaired of ever becoming decent penmen with this copperplate perfection mocking our clumsy fingers.

There was one item in penmanship which our teachers generally omitted altogether. It was the art of making and mending pens. I suffer, and others on my account suffer from this neglect even to this day. The untraceable 'partridge tracks,' as some one called them, with which I perplex my

correspondents, and am now about to provoke the printer, are chargeable to my ignorance of penmaking. It is a fact, however some acquaintances may doubt it, that I generally write very legibly, if not gracefully, whenever I borrow, beg, or steal a pen.

Let not the faithful Wrifford, should his eye chance to fall on this lament, think that I have forgotten his twelve lessons of one hour each, on twelve successive, cold November days, when I was just on the eve of commencing pedagogue for the first time; (for I too have kept a district school in a manner somewhat like as it was;)—I have not forgotten them. He did well for me. But alas, his tall form bent over my shoulder, his long flexile finger adjusted my pen, and his vigilant eye glanced his admonitions in vain. That thirteenth lesson which he added gratis, to teach us penmaking, I was so unfortunate as to lose. Lamentable to me and to many others, that I was kept away.

I blush while I acknowledge it, but I have taught school, have taught penmanship, have made and mended a hundred pens a-day, and all the time I knew not much more of the art of turning quill into pen, than did the goose from whose wing it was plucked. But my manufactures were received by my pupils as good. Good of course they must be, for the *master* made them, and who should dare to question *his* competency! If the instrument did not operate well, the fault must certainly be in the fingers that wielded, not those that wrought it.

O ye pedagogues! whom I have here condemned

to 'everlasting fame,' taking it for granted that this record will be famous for ever, be not too angry with my humble authorship, for I, too, let it be repeated, have kept a district school as it *was*, as well as *been* to one. But, brother pedagogues of the past, I will tell you what I purpose to do; perhaps some of you will purpose to do so likewise. Should this exposure of our deficiencies meet with a tolerable sale, I purpose to employ a teacher in the art of cutting, splitting, and shaving pen-timber into the best possible fitness for chirographic use. It is my heart's hope, and it shall be my hand's care, that he may not teach in vain. Then, if I cannot make amends to my cheated pupils, I trust that the wearied eyes and worn-out patience of former tracers of 'partridge tracks' shall recover, to be thus wearied and worn out no more.

Of my seventh winter I have but little to say, for but little was done worthy of record here. We had an indolent master and an idle school. Some tried to kindle up the speaking spirit again, but the teacher had no taste that way. But there was dialoguing enough, nevertheless,—in that form called whispering. Our school was a theatre in earnest, for 'plays' were going on all the time. It was 'acting' to the life, but acting any-how rather than like scholars at their books. But let that winter and its works, or rather want of works, pass. Of the eighth I can say something perhaps better worth notice.

In consequence of the lax discipline of the two

last winters the school had fallen into very idle and turbulent habits. 'A master that will keep order, a master that will keep order,' was the cry throughout the district. Accordingly such a one was sought, and fortunately found. A certain Mr. Johnston, who had taught in a neighbouring town, was famous for his strictness, and that without much punishing. He was obtained at a little higher price than usual, and was thought to be well worth the addition. I will describe his person, and relate an incident as characteristic of the man.

Mr. Johnson was full six feet high, with the diameter of his chest and limbs in equal proportion. His face was long and as dusky as a Spaniard's, and the dark was still darkened by the roots of an enormous beard. His eyes were black, and looked floggings and blood from out their cavernous sockets, which were overhung by eye-brows not unlike brush-heaps. His hair was black and curly, and extended down, and expanded on each side of his face in a pair of whiskers a freebooter might have envied.

He possessed the longest, widest, and thickest ruler I ever saw. This was seldom brandished in his hand, but generally lay in sight upon the desk. Although he was so famous for the order he kept school, he scarcely ever had to use his punitive instrument. His look, bearing and voice were enough for the subjection of the most riotous school. Never was our school so still and so studious as this winter. A circumstance occurred the very first day, which drove everything like mischief in consternation from

every scholar's heart. Abijah Wilkins had for years been called the worst boy in school. Masters could do nothing with him. He was surly, saucy, profane and truthless. Mr. Patch took him from an alms-house when he was eight years old, which was eight years before the point of time now in view. In his family were mended neither his disposition, his manners, nor even his clothes. He looked like a morose, unpitied pauper still. He had shaken his knurly and filthy fist in the very face and eyes of the last winter's teacher. Mr. Johnson was told of this son of perdition before he began, and was prepared to take some efficient step at his first offence.

Well, the afternoon of the first day, Abijah thrust a pin into a boy beside him, which made him suddenly cry out with the sharp pain. The sufferer was questioned, Abijah was accused, and found guilty. The master requested James Clark to go to his room and bring a rattan he would find there, as if the formidable ferule was unequal to the present exigency. James came with a rattan very long and very elastic, as if it had been selected from a thousand, not to walk with, but to flagelate. Then he ordered all the blinds next to the road to be closed. He then said, 'Abijah, come this way.' He came. 'The school may shut their books and suspend their studies a few minutes. Abijah, take off your frock, fold it up, lay it on the seat behind you.' Abijah obeyed these several commands with sullen tardiness. Here, a boy up towards the back seat burst out into a sort of shuddering laugh,

produced by a nervous excitement he could not control. 'Silence!' said the master, with a thundering stamp on the floor, which made the house quake. All was as still as midnight. Not a foot moved, not a seat cracked, not a book rustled. The school seemed to be appalled. The expression of every countenance was changed. Some were unnaturally pale, some flushed, and all their distended and moistening eyes were fastened on the scene. The awful expectation was too much for one poor girl. 'May I go home,' she whined with an imploring and terrified look. A single look from the countenance of authority crushed the trembler down into her seat again. A tremulous sigh escaped from one of the larger girls, then all was breathlessly still again. 'Take off your jacket also, Abijah. Fold it and lay it on your frock.' Mr. Johnson then took his chair and set it away at the farthest distance the floor would permit, as if all the space that could be had would be necessary for the operations about to take place. He then took the rattan, and seemed to examine it closely, drew it through the hand, bent it almost double, laid it down again. He then took off his own coat, folded it up and laid it on the desk. Abijah's breast now heaved like a bellows, his limbs began to tremble, and his face was like a sheet. The master then took the rattan in his right hand, and the criminal by the collar with his left, his large knuckles pressing hard against the shoulder of the boy. He raised the stick high over the shrinking back. Then! O what a screech! Had the rod fallen? No, it still

remained suspended in the air. 'O—I wont do so agin—I'll *never* do so agin—O—O—don't—I will be good—sartinly will.' The threatening instrument of pain was gently taken from its elevation. The master spoke. 'You promise, do you?' 'Yis! sir,—O, yis! sir.' The tight grasp was withdrawn from the collar. 'Put on your frock and jacket and go to your seat. The rest of you may open your books again.' The school breathed again. Paper rustled, feet were carefully moved, the seats slightly cracked, but all things went on more stilly than before. Abijah kept his promise. He became an altered boy; obedient, peaceable, studious. This long and slow process of preparing for the punishment was artfully designed by the master, gradually to work up the boy's terrors and agonizing expectations to the highest pitch, until he should yield like a babe to the intensity of his emotions. His stubborn nature, which had been like an oak on the hills which no storm could prostrate, was whittled away and demolished, as it were, sliver by sliver.

Not Abijah Wilkins only, but the whole school were subdued to the most humble and habitual obedience by the scene I have described. The terror of it seemed to abide in their hearts. The school improved much this winter, that is, according to the ideas of improvement then prevailing. Lessons were well gotten, and well said, although the why and the wherefore of them was not asked or given.

Mr. Johnson was employed the next winter also, and it was the prevailing wish that he should be

engaged for the third time, but he could not be obtained. His reputation as a teacher had secured for him a school at twenty dollars per month for the year round, in a distant village, so we were never more to sit 'as still as mice,' in his most magisterial presence. For years the saying in the district, in respect to him was, 'He was the best master I ever went to; he kept such good order, and punished so little.'

The young are proverbially ignorant of the value of time. There is one portion of it, however, which they well know how to appreciate. They feel it to be a wealth both to the body and the soul. Its few moments are truly golden ones, forming a glittering spot amid the drowsy dullness of in-school duration. I refer to the forenoon and afternoon recess for 'going out.' Consider that we came from all the freedom of the farm, where we had the sweep of acres;—hills, valleys, woods and waters,—and were crowded, I may say packed, into the district box. Each one had scarcely more space than to allow him to shift his head from an inclination to one shoulder to an inclination to the other, or from leaning on the right elbow, to leaning on the left. There we were, the blood of health bouncing through our veins, feeding our strength, swelling our dimensions—and there we must stay, three hours on a stretch, with the exception of the afore-mentioned recess. No wonder that we should prize this brief period high, and rush tumultuously out of doors to enjoy it.

There is one circumstance in going out which so much amuses my recollection, that I will venture to describe it to my readers. It is the making of our bows, or 'manners,' as it is called. If one wishes to see variety in the doing of a single act, let him look at school boys, leaving their bows at the door. Tell me not of the diversities and characteristics, of the gentilities and the awkwardnesses, in the civility of shaking hands. The bow is as diversified and characteristic, as awkward or genteel, as any movement many-motioned man is called on to make. Especially in a country school, where fashion and politeness have not altered the tendencies of nature by forming the manners of all after one model of propriety. Besides, the bow was before the shake, both in the history of the world, and in that of every individual man. No doubt the world's first gentleman, nature taught, declined his head in some sort, in saluting for the first time the world's first lady, in primitive Eden. And no doubt every little boy has been instructed to make a 'nice bow,' from chubby Cain, Abel, and Seth, down to the mannered younglings of the present day.

Well then, it is near half-past ten, A. M. but seemingly eleven to the impatient youngsters, anticipation rather than reflection, being the faculty most in action just now. At last the master takes out his watch and gives a hasty glance at the index of the hour. Or if this premonitory symptom does not appear, watching eyes can discern the signs of the time in the face relaxing itself from severe duty, and in the moving lips just assuming that precise

form necessary to pronounce the sentence of liberation. Then, make ready, take aim, is at once the order of every idler. 'The boys may go out.' The little white heads on the little seat, as it is called, are the foremost, having nothing in front to impede a straight-forward sally. One little nimble foot is at the door in an instant, and as he lifts the latch, he tosses off a bow over his left shoulder, and is out in a twinkling. The next perhaps squares himself towards the master with more precision, not having his attention divided between opening the door and leaving his manners. Next comes the very least of the little, just in front of the big-boy rush behind him, tap-tapping and tottering along the floor, with his finger in his nose, but in wheeling from his bow, he blunders head first through the door, in his anxiety to get out of the way of the impending throng of fists and knees behind, in avoiding which he is prostrated under the tramp of cowhide.

Now come the big ones from behind the writing benches. Some of them make a bow with a jerk of the head and snap of the neck possible only to giddy-brained, oily-jointed boyhood. Some, whose mothers are of the precise cast, or who have had their manners stiffened at a dancing-school, will wait till the throng is a little thinned, and then they will strut out with their arms as straight at their sides as if there were no such things as elbows, and will let their upper person bend upon the middle hinge, as if this were the only joint in their frames. Some look straight at their toes, as the face

descends toward the floor. Others strain a glance up at the master, displaying an uncommon proportion of that beauty of the eye, the white. Lastly come the tenants of the extreme back seat, the Anaks of the school. One long-limbed, lank-sided, back-bending fellow of twenty is at the door at four strides; he has the proper curve already prepared by his ordinary gait, and he has nothing to do but swing round toward the master, and his manners are made. Another, whose body is developed in the full proportions of manhood, turns himself half way, and just gives the slightest inclination of the person. He thinks himself too much of a man to make such a ridiculous popping of the pate as the younglings who have preceded him. Another with a tread that makes the floor tremble, goes straight out through the open door, without turning to the right or the left, as much as to say, 'I am quite too old for that business!'

There are two in the short seat at the end of the spelling-floor, who have almost attained to the glorious, or rather vain-glorious age of twenty-one. They are, perhaps, even more aged than the venerable Rabbi of the school himself. So they respect their years, and put away childish things, inasmuch as they do not go out as their juniors do. One of them sticks to his slate. It is his last winter, and as he did not catch flying time by the forelock, he must cling to his heel. The other unpuckers his arithmetical brow, puts his pencil between his teeth, leans his head on his right palm, with his left fingers adjusts his foretop, and then composes himself into

an amiable gaze upon the fair remainder of the school. Perhaps his eye leaps at once to that damsel of eighteen on the furthermost seat, who is the secret mistress of his heart.

How still it is in the absence of half the limbs and lips of the domain. That little girl who has been buzzing round her lesson like a bee round a honeysuckle, off and on by turns, is now sipping its sweets, if any sweets there be, as closely and stilly as that same bee plunged in the bell of the flower. The secret of the unwonted silence is, that the master now knows on which side of the aisle to look for noise and mischief, if any happen.

It is time for the boys to come in. The master raps on the window as a signal. At first they tumble in one by one, keeping the door perpetually slamming. But soon, in rush the main body, pell-mell, rubbing their ears, kicking their heels, puffing, panting, wheezing. Impelled by the temporary chill, they crowd round the fire, regaining the needed warmth as much by the exercise of elbows as by the heat of fuel. 'Take your seats, you that have got warm,' says the master. No one starts. 'Take your seats, all of you.' Tramp, tramp, how the floor trembles again, and the seats clatter. There goes an inkstand. Ben pinches Tom to let him know that he must go in first. Tom stands back, but gives Ben a kick on the shins as he passes, to pay for that pinch.

'The girls may go out.' The noise and confusion are now of the feminine gender. Trip, trip, rustle, rustle. Shall I describe the diversities of the

courtesy? I could pen a trait or two, but prefer to leave the subject to the more discriminating quill of the courtesying sex. The shrill tones and gossipping chatter of girlhood now ring from without. But they do not stay long. Trip, trip, rustle, rustle, back again. Half of them are sucking a lump of snow for drink. One has broken an icicle from the well-spout, and is nibbling it as she would a stick of candy. See Sarah jump. The ice-eater's cold, dripping hand has mischievously sprinkled her neck. Down goes the melting little cone, and is scattered in shivers. 'Take your seats,' says authority with soft command. He is immediately obeyed; and the dull routine rolls on toward noon.

Noon has come. It is even half past twelve, for the teacher got puzzled with a hard sum, and did not attend to the second reading of the first class so soon as usual by half an hour. It has been hitch, hitch—joggle, joggle—creak, creak, all over the school-room for a considerable time. 'You are dismissed,' comes at last. The going out of half the school only was a noisy business, but now there is a tenfold thunder, augmented by the windy rush of many petticoats. All the voices of all the tongues now split, or rather shatter the air, if I may so speak. There are more various tones than could be indicated by all the epithets ever applied to sound.

The first manual operation is the extracting of certain parcels from pockets, bags, baskets, hat-crowns, and perhaps the capacious cavity formed by

the tie of a short open frock. Then what a savory development—bread, cheese, cakes, pies, sausages, and apples without number. It is voice versus appetite now for the occupancy of the mouth. Or to speak less lawyer-like and more popularly, they have a *jaw* together.

The case is soon decided, that is, dinner is dispatched. Then commences what, in view of most of us,is the chief business of the day. Before describing this, however, I would premise a little. The principal allurement and prime happiness of going to school as it used to be conducted, was the opportunity it afforded for social amusement. Our rural abodes were scattered generally a half or a quarter of a mile apart, and the young could not see each other every day as conveniently as they can in a city or a village. The schooling season was therefore looked forward to as one long series of holydays, or as Mark Martin once said, as so many thanksgiving days, except the music, the sermon, and the dinner. Mark Martin, let me mention by the way, was the wit of the school. Some of his sayings that made us laugh at the time, I shall hereafter put down. They may not affect the reader, however, as they did us, for the lack of his peculiar manner which set them off. 'What a droll fellow Mark Martin is,' used to be the frequent expression.

Should I describe all the pastimes of the winter school, it would require more space than befits my plan. I shall therefore only touch on one or two of the different kinds of out-door frolic—such only

as are peculiar to winter, and give a particular zest to the schooling season.

Of all the sportive exercises of the winter school, the most exhilarating, indeed intensely delightful, was sliding down hill, or coasting as it is called. Not having the privilege of this, excepting in the snowy season, and then with frequent interruptions, it was far more highly prized. The situation of our school was uncommonly favourable for this diversion. Placed as we were on a hill, we could go down like arrows for the eighth of a mile on one side, and half that distance on the other. Almost every boy had his sled. Some of us got our names branded on the vehicle, and prided ourselves in the workmanship or the swiftness of it, as mariners do in that of a ship. We used to personify the dear little speeder with a she and a her, seaman-like also. Take it when a few days of severely cold and clear weather have permitted the road to be worn icy smooth, and the careering little coaster is the most enviable pleasure-rider that was ever eager to set out or sorry to stop. The very tugging up hill back again is not without its pleasure. The change of posture is agreeable, and also the stir of limb and stretch of muscle for the short time required to return to the starting-place. Then there is the looking forward to the glorious down-hill again. In all the pleasures of human experience there is nothing like coasting, for the regular alternation of glowing anticipation and frame-thrilling enjoyment.

Had there been a mill-pond or any other sufficient

expanse of water near the old school-house, I should probably now pen a paragraph on the delights of skating; but as there was not, and this was not therefore one of *our* school-sports, such a description would not properly belong to these annals.

But there is another pastime which comes only with the winter, and is enjoyed mostly at school, to which I will devote a few pages. It is the chivalrous pastime of snow-balling. Take for instance the earliest snow of winter, falling gently and stilly with its feathery flakes, of just the right moisture for easy manipulation. Or when the drifts soften in the mid-winter thaw, or begin to settle beneath the lengthened and sunny days of March, then is the season for the power and glory of a snow-ball fight. The whole school of the martial sex are out of a noon-time, from the veterans of a hundred battles down almost to the freshest recruits of the little front seat. Half against half, unless a certain number agree to take all the rest. The oldest are opposed to the oldest in the hostile array, so that the little round, and perhaps hard missile may not be out of proportion to the age, size, and toughness of the antagonist likely to be hit. The little boys of course against the little, with this advantage, that their discharges lose most of their force before reaching the object aimed at. When one is hit he is not merely wounded, he is a 'dead man' as to this battle. Here, no quarter is asked or given. The balls whistle, the men fall, until all are defunct but one or two individuals, who remain unkilled because there is no enemy left to hurl the fatal ball.

But our conflicts were not always make-believes, and conducted according to the formal rules of play; these sham-fights sometimes grew into the very reality of war.

The school was about equally divided between the east and the west ends of the district. There had from time immemorial come down a rivalry between the two parties in respect to physical activity and strength. At the close of the school in the afternoon, and at the parting of the scholars on their different ways toward home, there were almost always a few farewells in the form of a sudden trip-up, a dab of snow, or an ice-ball almost as tenderly soft and agreeable of contact as that mellow thing, a stone. These valedictories were as courteously reciprocated from the other side.

These slight skirmishes would sometimes grow into a general battle, when the arm was not careful to proportion the force just so as to touch and no more, as in a noon-day game.

One battle I recollect which is worthy of being commemorated in a book, at least a book about boyhood, like this. It is as fresh before my mind's eye as if it were but yesterday. To swell somewhat into the pompous,—the glorious Waterloo could not be remembered by its surviving heroes with greater tenacity or distinctness.

It had gently but steadily snowed all one December night, and almost all the next day. Owing to the weather, there were no girls excepting Captain Clark's two, and no very small boys at school. The scholars had been unusually playful through the

day, and had taken liberties which would not have been tolerated in the full school.

When we were dismissed at night the snow had done falling, and the ammunition of just the right moisture, lay in exhaustless abundance on the ground, all as level as a floor, for there had been no wind to distribute unequally the gifts of the impartial clouds. The first boy that sprang from the threshold caught up a mass of the spotless but viscid material, and whitewashed the face of the next one at the door, who happened to belong to the rival side. This was a signal for general action. As fast as the troops poured out they rushed to the conflict. We had not the coolness deliberately to arrange ourselves in battle order, line against line, but each aimed at each as he could, no matter whom, how, or where, provided that he belonged to the ' other end.' We did not round the snow into shape, but hurled and dashed it in large masses, as we happened to snatch or scoop it up. As the combatants in gunpowder war are hidden from each other by clouds of their own raising, so also our warriors clouded themselves from sight. And there were other obstacles to vision besides the discharges in the air; for one or both the eyes of us all were glued up and sealed in darkness by the damp, sticky matter. The nasal and auditory cavities too were temporarily closed. And here and there a mouth opening to catch a little breath, received the same snowy visitation.

At length, from putting snow into each other, we took to putting each other into the snow. Not by

the formal and deliberate wrestle, but pell-mell, hurly-burly, as foot, hand, or head could find an advantage. The combatants were covered with the clinging element. It was as if their woollen habiliments had turned back to their original white. So completely were we all besmeared by the same material, that we could not tell friend from foe in the blind encounter. No matter for this; we were now crazed with fun; and we were ready to carry it to the utmost extent that time, and space, and snow would admit. Just opposite the school-house door the hill descended very steeply from the road for about ten rods. The stone wall just here was quite low, and completely covered with snow even before this last fall. The two stoutest champions of the fray had been snowing it into each other like storm-spirits from the two opposite poles. At length as if their snow-bolts were exhausted, they seized each other for the tug of muscle with muscle. They had unconsciously worked themselves to the precipitous brink. Another stout fellow caught a glimpse of their position, gave a rush and a push, and both Arctic and Antarctic went tumbling heels hindmost down the steep declivity, until they were stopped by the new fallen snow in which they were completely buried; and one with his nose downward as if he had voluntarily dived into his own grave. This was a signal for a general push-off, and the performer of the sudden exploit was the first to be gathered to his victims below. In five minutes all were in the same predicament but one, who not finding himself attacked, wiped the plaster

from his eyes, and saw himself the lone hero of the field. He gave a victorious shout, then not liking solitude for a play-mate, he made a dauntless leap after the rest, who were now thickly rising from their snowy burial to life, action, and fun anew. Now the game is to put each other down, down, to the bottom of the hill. There is pulling, pushing, pitching, and whirling, every species of manual attack, except the pugilistic thump and knock-down. One long lubber has fallen exactly parallel with the bottom, and before he can recover himself two others are rolling him down like a senseless log, until the lumberers themselves are pitched head first over their timber by other hands still behind them. But at length we are all at the bottom of the hill, and indeed at the bottom of our strength. Which end had the day could not be determined. In one sense it belonged to neither, for it was night. We now found ourselves in a plight not particularly comfortable to ourselves nor likely to be very agreeable to the domestic guardians we must now meet. But the battle has been described, and that is enough; there is no glory in the suffering that succeeds.

At the age of twelve I commenced the study of arithmetic, that chiefest of sciences in Yankee estimation. No man is willing that his son should be without skill in figures. And if he does not teach him his A, B, C, at home, he will the art of counting, at least. Many a father deems it no hardship to instruct his child to enumerate even up

to a hundred, when it would seem beyond his capacity or certainly beyond the leisure of his rainy days and winter evenings, to sit down with the formality of a book and teach him to read.

The entering on arithmetic was quite an era in my school-boy life. This was placing me decidedly among the great boys and within hailing distance of manhood. My feelings were consequently considerably elevated. A new Adams' Arithmetic of the latest edition was bought for my use. It was covered by the maternal hand with stout sheep-skin, in the economical expectation that after I had done with it, it might help still younger heads to the golden science. A quire of foolscap was made to take the form of a manuscript of the full length of the sheet, with a pasteboard cover, as more suitable to the dignity of such superior dimensions than flimsy brown paper.

I had also a bran new slate, for Ben used father's old one. It was set in a frame wrought by the aforesaid Ben, who prided himself on his knack at tools, considering that he had never served an apprenticeship at their use. There was no lack of timber in the fabrication. Mark Martin said that he could make a better frame with a jack-knife in his left hand, and keeping his right in his pocket.

My first exercise was transcribing from my arithmetic to my manuscript. At the top of the first page I penned ARITHMETIC, in capitals an inch high, and so broad that this one word reached entirely across the page. At a due distance below, I wrote the word Addition in large, coarse hand,

beginning with a lofty A, which seemed like the drawing of a mountain peak, towering above the level wilderness below. Then came Rule, in a little smaller hand, so that there was a regular gradation from the enormous capitals at the top, down to the fine running—no, hobbling hand in which I wrote off the rule.

Now slate and pencil and brain came into use. I met with no difficulty at first; Simple Addition was as easy as counting my fingers. But there was one thing I could not understand—that carrying of tens. It was absolutely necessary, I perceived, in order to get the right answer; yet it was a mystery which that arithmetical oracle, our schoolmaster, did not see fit to explain. It is possible that it was a mystery to him. Then came Subtraction. The borrowing of ten was another unaccountable operation. The reason seemed to me then at the very bottom of the well of science; and there it remained for that winter, for no friendly bucket brought it up to my reach.

Every rule was transcribed into my manuscript, and each sum likewise as it stood proposed in the book, and also the whole process of figures by which the answer was found.

Each rule moreover was, or rather was to be, committed to memory, word for word, which to me was the most tedious and difficult job of the whole.

I advanced as far as Reduction this first winter, and a third through my manuscript, perhaps. The end of the arithmetic seemed almost as far off in the

future as that end of boyhood and under-age restraint, twenty one.

The next winter I began at Addition again, to advance just through Interest. My third season I went over the same ground again, and besides that, cyphered to the very last sum in the Rule of Three. This was deemed quite an achievement for a lad only fourteen years old, according to the ideas prevailing at that period. Indeed I was now fitted to figure on and fill up the blank pages of manhood, to solve the hard question how much money I should be worth in the course of years. In plain language, whoever cyphered through the above-mentioned rule was supposed to have arithmetic enough for the common purposes of life. If one proceeded a few rules beyond this, he was considered 'quite smart.' But if he went clear through, Miscellaneous Questions and all, he was thought to have an extraordinary taste and genius for figures. Now and then a youth, after having been through Adams, entered upon old Pike, the arithmetical sage who 'set the sums' for the preceding generation. Such were called 'great arithmeticians.'

The fourth winter I advanced—but it is not important to the purpose of this work that I should record the minutiæ of my progress in the science of numbers. Suffice it to say that I was not one of the 'great at figures.'

The female portion of the school, we may suppose, generally expected to obtain husbands to perform whatever arithmetical operations they might need, beyond the counting of fingers; so the science found

no special favor with them. If pursued at all, it was neglected till the last year or two of their schooling. Most were provident enough to cypher as far as through the four simple rules; for, although they had no idea of becoming old maids, they might possibly be left widows. Had arithmetic been pursued at the summer-school, those who intended to be summer teachers would probably have thought more of the science, and have proceeded further, even perhaps to the Rule of Three. But a school-mistress would as soon have been expected to teach the Arabic language, as the numerical science. Consequently ignorance of it was no dishonour to even the first and best of the sex.

But what a change the last few years have produced in respect to this subject. Honour and gratitude be to Pestalozzi; thanks be to our countrymen, Colburn, Emerson, and others, for making what was the hardest and driest of studies, one of the easiest and most interesting. They have at length tackled the intellectual team aright; have put the carriage behind the carrier;—pshaw! this over-refinement spoils the illustration—the cart behind the horse, where it ought always to have been. Formerly, memory, the mind's baggage-waggon, to change the word, but continue the figure, was loaded with rules, rules, words, words, to top-heaviness, and sent lumbering along, while the understanding, which should have been the living and spirited mover of the vehicle, was kept ill-fed and lean, and put loosely behind to push after as it could.

My tenth winter, our school was put under the instruction of a person named Augustus Starr. He was a native of a neighbouring town, and had before been acquainted with the committee. He had taught school some years before; but for the last few years, had been engaged in a business not particularly conducive to improvement in the art of teaching. He had been an inferior officer aboard a privateer in the late war, which terminated only the winter before. At the return of peace he betook himself to land again; and till something more suitable to his tastes and habits should offer, he concluded to resume school-keeping, at least for one winter. He came to our town, and finding an old acquaintance seeking for a teacher, he offered himself and was accepted. He was rather genteelly dressed, and gentlemanly in his manners.

But Mr. Starr soon manifested that stern command, rather than mild persuasion, had been his method of preserving order, and was to be still. This would have been put up with, but he soon showed that he could deal in blows as well as words, and these not merely with the customary ferule, or supple and tingling stick, but with whatever came to hand. He knocked one lad down with his fist, and hurled a stick of wood at another, which missed breaking his head because it struck the ceiling, making a dent which fearfully indicated what would have been the consequence had a skull been hit. The scholars were terrified, parents were alarmed, and some kept their younger children at home. There was an uproar in the district. A school-

meeting was threatened for the purpose of dismissing the captain, as he began to be called, in reference to the station he had lately filled, although it was not a captaincy. But he commanded the school-house crew; so in speaking of him they gave him a a corresponding title. In consequence of these indications, our officer became less dangerous in his modes of punishment, and was permitted to continue still in command. But he was terribly severe nevertheless; and in his words of menace, he manifested no particular respect for that one of the ten commandments which forbids profanity. But he took pains with his pupils, and they made considerable progress according to the prevailing notions of education.

Toward the close of the school, however, Starr's fractious temper, his cuffs, thumps, and cudgellings waxed dangerous again. There were signs of mutiny among the larger scholars, and there were provocations and loud talk among parents. The man of violence, even at this late period, would have been dismissed by the authority of the district, had not a sudden and less formal ejection overtaken him.

The captain had been outrageously severe, and even cruel to some of the smaller boys. The older brothers of the sufferers, with others of the back seat, declared among themselves, that they would put him by force out of the school-house, if anything of the like should happen again. The very afternoon succeeding this resolution, an opportunity offered to put it to the test. John Howe,

for some trifling misdemeanor, received a cut with the edge of the ruler on his head, which drew blood. The dripping wound and the scream of the boy, were a signal for action, as if a murderer were at his fell deed before their eyes. Thomas Howe, one of the oldest in the school, and the brother of the abused, and Mark Martin were at the side of our privateer in an instant. Two others followed. His ruler was wrested from his hand and he was seized by his legs and shoulders, before he could well remember into what hands he had fallen. He was carried kicking and swearing out doors. But this was not the end of his headlong and horizontal career. 'To the side-hill, to the side-hill,' cried Mark, who had him by the head. Now it so happened that the hill-side opposite the school-house door was crusted, and as smooth and slippery as pure ice, from a recent rain. To this slope then he was borne, and in all the haste which his violent struggles would permit. Over he was thrust as if he were a log, and down he went, giving one of his bearers a kick as he was shoved from their hands, which action of the foot sent him more swiftly on his way, from its rebound. There was no bush or stone to catch by in his descent, and he clawed the unyielding crust with his nails, for the want of any thing more prominent on which to lay hold. Down, down he went. O for a pile of stones or a thicket of thorns to cling to, even at the expense of torn apparel or scratched fingers. Down, down he went, until he fairly came to the climax, or rather anti-climax of his pedagogical career. Mark Martin,

who retained singular self-possession, cried out, 'there goes a shooting-star.'

When our master had come to a 'period or full stop,' to quote from the spelling-book, he lay a moment as if he had left his breath behind him, or as if querying whether he should consider himself alive or not; or perhaps whether it were really his own honorable self who had been voyaging in this unseamanlike fashion, or somebody else. Perhaps he was at a loss for the points of the compass, as is often the case in tumbles and topsy-turvies. He at length arose and stood upright, facing the ship of literature which he had lately commanded, and his mutinous crew, great and small, male and female, now lining the side of the road next to the declivity, from which most of them had witnessed his expedition. The movement had been so sudden, and the ejection so unanticipated by the school in general, that they were stupified with amazement. And the bold performers of the exploit were almost as much amazed as the rest, excepting Mark, who still retained coolness enough for his joke. 'What think ye of the *coasting* trade, Captain,' shouted Mark, 'is it as profitable as privateering?' Our coaster made no reply, but turned in pursuit of a convenient footing to get up into the road, and to the school-house again. While he was at a distance, approaching his late station of command, Mark Martin stepped forward to hold a parley with him. 'We have a word to say to you, Sir, before you come much farther. If you will come back peaceably, you may come; but as sure as you meddle

with any of us, we will make you acquainted with the *heft* and the hardness of our fists, and of stones and clubs too, if we must. The ship is no longer yours, so look out, for we are our own men now.' Starr replied, 'I do not wish to have anything more to do with the school; and there is another law besides club law, and that you have got to take.' But when he came up and saw John Howe's face stained with blood, and his head bound up as if it had received the stroke of a cutlas, he began to look rather blank. Our spokesman reminded him of what he had done, and inquired 'which was the worst, a ride and a slide, or a gashed head?' 'I rather guess that you are the one to look out for the law,' said Thomas Howe, with a threatening tone and look. Whether this hint had effect I know not, but he never commenced a prosecution. He gathered up his goods and chattels and left the school-house. The scholars gathered up their implements of learning and left likewise, after the boys had taken one more glorious slide down hill.

There were both gladness and regret in that dispersion; gladness that they had no more broken heads, shattered hands, and skinned backs to fear, and regret that the season of schooling and of social and delightful play had been cut short by a week.

The news reached most of the district in the course of the next day, that our 'man of war,' as he was sometimes called, had sailed out of port the night before.

This winter Major Allen was the committee, and of course every body expected a dear master if not a good one; he had always expressed himself so decidedly against 'your cheap trash.' They were not disappointed. They had a dear master, high-priced and not much worth. Major Allen sent to college for an instructor, as a young gentleman from such an institution must of course be qualified as to learning, and would give a higher tone to the school. He had good reason for the expectation, as a gentleman from the same institution had taught the two preceding winters in another town where Major Allen was intimately acquainted, and gave the highest satisfaction. But he was a very different sort of person from Mr. Frederic Silverson, of the city of ——, member of the junior class in —— College. This young gentleman did not teach eight weeks at eighteen dollars per month, for the sake of the trifling sum to pay his college bills, and help him to rub a little more easily through. He kept for fun, as he told his fellow bucks; that is, to see the fashions of country life, 'cut capers' among folks whose opinion he did not care for, and to bring back something to laugh about all the next term. The money, though, might be some consideration, as it would pay a bill or two which he preferred that his indulgent father should not know of.

Major Allen had written to some of the college authorities for an instructor, not doubting that he should obtain one of proved worth, or at least one who had been acquainted with country schools in his boyhood, and would undertake the duty with such

motives as would ensure a faithful discharge of his duties. But a tutor, an intimate acquaintance of Silverson's family, was requested to aid the self-rusticating son to a school, so by this means this city beau and college buck was sent to preside over our district seminary of letters.

Well, Mr. Silverson arrived on Saturday evening at Captain Clark's. Sunday, he went to meeting. He was indeed a very genteel-looking personage, and caused quite a sensation among the young people in our meeting-house, especially those of our district. He was tall, but rather slender, with a delicate skin, and a cheek whose roses had not been uprooted from their native bed by what in college is called hard digging. His hair was cut and combed in the newest fashion, as was supposed, as it was arranged very differently from that of our young men. Then he wore a cloak of many coloured plaid, in which flaming red however was predominate. A plaid cloak—this was a new thing in our obscure town at that period, and struck us with admiration. We had seen nothing but surtouts and great coats from our fathers' sheep and our mothers' looms. His cravat was tied behind; this was another novelty. We had never dreamed but that the knot should be made, and the ends should dangle beneath the chin. Then his bosom flourished with a ruffle and glistened with a breast-pin, such as were seldom seen so far among the hills.

Captain Clark unconsciously assumed a stateliness of gait unusual to him, as he led the way up the centre aisle, introduced the gentleman into his

pew, and gave him his own seat, that is, next the aisle, and the most respectable in the pew. The young gentleman not having been accustomed to such deference in public, was a little confused. And when he heard 'that is the new master,' whispered very distinctly by some one near, and on looking up, saw himself the centre of an all-surrounding stare, he was smitten with a fit of bashfulness, such as he had never felt before; so he twisted his fingers, and sucked and bit his lips as a relief to his feelings, just as those rustic starers would have done at a splendid party in his mother's drawing room. During singing he was intent on the hymn-book, in the prayer he bent over the pew-side, and during the sermon looked straight at the preacher, a church-like deportment which he had never perhaps manifested before, and probably may never have since. He was certainly not so severely decorous in that meeting-house again. After the forenoon services he committed a most egregious blunder, by which his bashfulness was swallowed up in shame. It was the custom in country towns then, for all who sat in the centre or broad aisle as it was called, to remain in their pews till the reverend man of the pulpit had passed by. Our city bred gentleman was not apprized of this etiquette, for it did not prevail in the metropolis. Well, as soon as the last amen was pronounced, Captain Clark politely handed him his hat, and being next to the pew door, he supposed that he must make his egress first. He stepped out and had gone several feet down the aisle, when

he observed old and young standing in their pews on both sides in front of his advance, staring at him as if surprised, and some of them with an incipient laugh. He turned his head and gave a glance back, and behold he was alone in the long avenue, with a double line of eyes aimed at him from behind as well as before. All seemed waiting for the minister, who by this time had just reached the foot of the pulpit stairs. He was confounded with a consciousness of his mistake. Should he keep on or return to the pew, was a momentary question. It was a dilemma worse than any in logic, it was a severe *screw*.[1] But finally back he was going, when behold Captain Clark's pew was blocked up by the out-poured and out-pouring throng of people, with the minister at their head. This was a complete *dead set*, 'above all Greek, above all Roman fame.' What should he do now? He wheeled again, dropped his head, put his left hand to his face, and went crouching down the aisle, and out at the door, like a boy going out with the nose-bleed.

On the ensuing morning our collegian commenced school. He had never taught, and he had never resided in the country before. He had acquired a knowledge of the daily routine usually pursued in school, from a class-mate who had some experience in the vocation. So he began things right end foremost, and finished at the other extremity in due order, but they were most clumsily

[1] When a scholar gets considerably puzzled in recitation, he is said in college to 'take a screw.' When he is so ignorant of his lesson as not to be able to recite at all, he 'takes a dead set.'

handled all the way through. His first fault was exceeding indolence; he had escaped beyond the call of the morning prayer bell, that had roused him at dawn, and he seemed resolved to replenish his nature with sleep. He was generally awakened to the consciousness of his being a schoolmaster, by the ringing shouts of his waiting pupils. Then a country breakfast was too delicious a contrast to college commons, to be cut short. Thus that point of duration called nine o'clock, and school time, often approximated exceedingly near to ten that winter.

Mr. Silverson did not visit in the several families of the district, as most of his predecessors had done. He would have been pleased to visit at every house, for he was socially inclined, and what was more, he desired to pick up 'food for fun' when he should return to college. But the people did not think themselves 'smart' enough to entertain a collegian, and the son of the rich Mr. ——, of the city of ——, besides. Or perhaps, what is coming nearer the precise truth, his habits and pursuits were so different from theirs, that they did not know exactly how to get at him, and in what manner to attempt to entertain him. And he, on the other hand, did not know how to fall into the train of their associations in his conversation, so as to make them feel at ease, and as it were, at home with him. Another circumstance ought to be mentioned perhaps; the people very soon contracted a growing prejudice against our school-master, on account of his very evident unfitness for his present

vocation, and especially his unpardonable indolence and neglect of duty.

So Mr. Silverson was not invited out, excepting by Major Allen, who engaged him, and by two or three others who chanced to come in contact with him, and to find him more sociably disposed, and a less formidable personage than they anticipated. He spent most of his evenings therefore at his boarding place, with one volume in his hand, generally that of a novel, and another volume issuing from his mouth—that of smoke; and as his chief object was just to kill time, he was not careful that the former should not be as funny, as baseless, and as unprofitable as the latter. As for the Greek, Latin, and Mathematics, to which he should have devoted some portion of his time, according to the college regulations, he never looked at them till his return, then he just glanced them over, and trusted luck when he was examined for two weeks' study, as he had done a hundred times before at the daily recitation.

What our young college buck carried back to laugh about all the next term, I do not know, unless it was his own dear self for being so foolish as to undertake a business for which he was so utterly unfit, and from which he derived so little pleasure compared with his anticipations.

Before closing this chapter, I would caution the reader not to take the subject of it as a specimen of all heirs of city opulence who are, or have been members of college, and have perhaps attempted country school-keeping. I have known many of a very different stamp; one gentleman in particular

rises to recollection, the son of very affluent, but also very judicious parents. While a student in college, he took a district school for the winter vacation. His chief purpose was to add to his stores of valuable knowledge, and prepare himself for wider usefulness. He would not study the things of ancient Greece and Rome, and of modern Europe, and neglect the customs and manners, and the habits of thinking and feeling, characteristic of his own nation. But his own nation were substantially the farmers and mechanics scattered on the hills and along the valleys of the country. To the country he must therefore go, and into the midst of their very domestic circles to study them. But he did not seek this advantage to the disadvantage of the school committed to his charge. He endeavoured to make himself acquainted with his duties as much as he conveniently could beforehand, and then he devoted himself assiduously to them. In the instruction of the young he derived a benefit additional to his principal object in taking the school. He learned the art of communication—of adapting himself to minds differing in capacity and cultivation from his own. In this way he acquired a tact in addressing the young, and the less intelligent among the grown-up, which is now not only a gratification, but of great use. He became moreover interested in the great subject of education, more than he otherwise would—the education of the great mass of the people; so that now he is one of the most ardent and efficient agents in this patriotic and benevolent work.

This gentleman was exceedingly liked as a teacher, and was very popular as a visitor in the families of the district. 'He seems so like one of *us*. He hasn't an atom of pride.' Such were the frequent remarks; and this was what they did not expect of a collegian, city born, and the son of one of the richest men in the state.

He has often remarked since, that these two months spent in a district school and country neighbourhood, were of as much value to him as any two months of his life; indeed, of more value than any single year of his life. His books enriched and disciplined his mind perhaps; but this mingling with the middle rank, of which the great majority is composed, more thoroughly Americanized his mind. By his residence among the country people, he learned to do what should be done by every citizen of the United States, however distinguished by birth, wealth, talents, or education;—he learned to identify himself with the great body of the nation: and to consider himself as one of the people.

My twelfth winter has arrived. It was thought best to try a teacher from College again, as the committee had been assured that there were teachers to be found there of the first order, and well worth the high price they demanded for their services. A Mr. Ellis was engaged at twenty dollars per month, from the same institution mentioned before. Particular pains were taken to ascertain the college character and school-keeping experience of the gentleman before his engagement,

and they were such as to warrant the highest expectations.

The instructor was to board round in the several families of the district, who gave the board in order to lengthen the school to the usual term. It happened that he was to be at our house the first week. On Saturday Mr. Ellis arrived. It was a great event to us children, for the master to stop at our house, and one from college too. We were smitten with bashfulness, and stiffened into an awkwardness unusual with us even among strangers. But this did not last long; our guest put us all at ease very soon; he seemed just like one of us, or like some unpuffed-up uncle from genteeler life, who had dropped in upon us for a night, with cordial heart, chatty tongue, and merry laugh. He seemed perfectly acquainted with our prevailing thoughts and feelings, and let his conversation slide into the current they flowed in, as easily as if he had never been nearer college than we ourselves. With my father he talked about the price of produce, the various processes and improvements in agriculture, and the politics of the day, and such other topics as would be likely to interest a farmer so far in the country. And those topics indeed were not a few. Some students would have sat in dignified or rather dumpish silence, and have gone to bed by mid-evening, simply because those who sat with them could not discourse on those deep things of science, and lofty matters of literature, which were particularly interesting to themselves. With my mother Mr. Ellis talked at first about her children; he

patted a little brother on his cheek, took a sister on his knee, and inquired the baby's name. Then he drew forth a housewifely strain concerning various matters in country domestic life. Of me he inquired respecting my studies at school years past, and even condescended to speak of his own boyhood and youth, and of the sports as well as the duties of school. The fact is, that Mr. Ellis had always lived in the country till three years past, and his mind was full of rural remembrances, and he knew just how to take us, so as to be agreeable himself, and to elicit entertainment in return.

Mr. Ellis showed himself at home in school, as well as at the domestic fireside. He was perfectly familiar with his duties, as custom had prescribed them. But he did not abide altogether by the old usages; he spent much time in explaining those rules in arithmetic, and grammar, and those passages in the spelling-book with which we had hitherto merely lumbered our memories.

This teacher introduced a new exercise into our school, which we had never thought of before as being possible to ourselves. It was composition; we hardly knew what to make of it. To write—to put sentence after sentence like a newspaper, a book, or a sermon. Oh! we could not do this; we could not think of such a thing; indeed it was an impossibility, but we must try at any rate. The subject given out for this novel use of thought and pen, was friendship. Friendship—what had we to say on this subject. We could feel on it perhaps, especially those of us who had read a novel or two,

and had dreamed of eternal friendship. But we had not a single idea. Friendship! Oh! it is a delightful thing. This, or something similar was about all we poor creatures could think of. What a spectacle of wretchedness did we present. A stranger would have supposed us all smitten with the tooth-ache, by the agony expressed in the face. One poor girl put her head down into a corner, and cried till the master excused her. And finally, finding that neither smiles nor frowns would put ideas into our heads, he let us go for that week.

In about a fortnight, to our horror, the exercise was proposed again; but it was only to write a letter. Any one could do as much as this, the master said, for almost every one had occasion to do it in the course of life. Indeed, we thought on the whole, that we could write a letter,—so at it we went with considerable alacrity. But our attempts in the epistolary line, were nothing like those spirited, and even witty products of thought, which used ever to be flying from seat to seat in the shape of billets. The sprightly fancy and the gushing heart seemed to have been chilled and deadened by the reflection that a letter *must* be written, and the master *must* see it. These epistolary compositions generally began, continued, and closed all in the same way, as if all had got the same recipe from their grandmothers for letter-writing. They mostly commenced in this manner. 'Dear Friend, I take my pen in hand to inform you that I am well, and hope you are enjoying the same blessing.' Then there would be added, perhaps, 'We have a very

good schoolmaster. Have you a good one? How long has your school got to keep? We have had a terrible stormy time on't.' &c. Mark Martin addressed the master in his epistle. What its contents were I could not find out, but I saw Mr. Ellis read it. At first he looked grave, as at the assurance of the youth; then a little severe, as if his dignity was outraged, but in a moment he smiled, and finally, he almost burst out with laughter at some closing witticism.

Mark's was the only composition that had any nature and soul in it; he wrote what he thought, instead of thinking what to write, like the rest of us, who in the effort thought just nothing at all, for we wrote words which we had seen written a hundred times before.

Mr. Ellis succeeded in delivering us from our stale and flat formalities before he had done. He gave us no more such abstract and lack-idea subjects as Friendship. He learned better how to accommodate the theme to the youthful mind. We were set to describe what we had seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, and what had particularly interested our feelings at one time and another. One boy described the process of cider-making, another gave an account of a squirrel hunt, another of a great husking, each of which had been witnessed the autumn before. The girls described certain domestic operations. One, I remember, gave quite an amusing account of the coming, and going, and final tarrying of her mother's soap; another penned a sprightly dialogue, supposed to

have taken place between two sisters on the question—which should go a visiting with mother, and which should stay at home and 'take care of the things.'

The second winter (for he taught two) Mr. Ellis occasionally proposed more abstract subjects, and such as required more thinking and reasoning, but still such as were likely to be interesting, and on which he knew his scholars to possess at least a few ideas.

I need not say how popular Mr. Ellis was in the district. He was decidedly the best school-master I ever went to, and he was the last.

I have given him a place here, not because he is to be classed with his predecessors who taught the District School as it *was*, but because he closed the series of my own instructors there, and was the last moreover, who occupied the old school-house. He commenced a new era in our district.

Before closing, I must give one necessary hint. Let it not be inferred from this narrative of my own particular experience, that the best teachers of district schools are to be found in college only. The very next winter the school was blessed with an instructor even superior to Mr. Ellis, although he was not a collegian. Mr. Henry, however, had well disciplined and informed his mind, and was, moreover, an experienced teacher. I was not one of his pupils, but I was in the neighbourhood, and knew of his methods, his faithfulness, and success. His tall, spare, stooping and dyspeptic form is now distinctly before my mind's eye. I see him wearied

with incessant exertion, taking his way homeward, at the close of the afternoon school. His pockets are filled with compositions to be looked over in private. There are school-papers in his hat too. A large bundle of writing books is under his arm. Through the long evening, and in the little leisure of the morning, I see him still hard at work for the good of his pupils. Perhaps he is surrounded by a circle of the larger scholars, whom he has invited to spend the evening with him, to receive a more thorough explanation of some branch or item of study, than there was time for in school. But stop —Mr. Henry did not keep the District School as it *was*, why then am I describing him?

The District School as it was, generally closed in the winter with what was called an examination. This was usually attended by the minister of the town, the committee who engaged the teacher, and such of the parents as chose to come in. Very few however were sufficiently interested in the improvement of their children, to spend three uncomfortable hours in the hot and crowded school-room, listening to the same dull round of words, year after year. If the school had been under the care of a good instructor, all was well of course; if a poor one, it was too late to help it. Or perhaps they thought they could not afford the time on a fair afternoon, and if the weather was stormy, it was rather more agreeable to stay at home; besides, 'nobody else will be there, and why should I go.' Whether such were the reflections of parents or not, scarcely more

than half of them, at most, ever attended the examination. I do not recollect that the summer school was examined at all. I know not the reason of this omission, unless it was that such had been the custom from time immemorial.

We shall suppose it to be the last day of the winter school. The scholars have on their better clothes, if their parents are somewhat particular, or if the every-day dress 'looks quite too bad.' The young ladies especially, wear the next best gown, and a more cleanly and tastefully worked neckerchief. Their hair displays more abundant curls and a more elaborate adjustment.

It is noon. The school-room is undergoing the operation of being swept as clean as a worn-out broom in the hands of one girl, and hemlock twigs in the hands of others will permit. Whew—what a dust. Alas for Mary's cape, so snow-white and smooth in the morning. Hannah's curls, which lay so close to each other, and so pat and still on her temples, have got loose by the exercise, and have stretched themselves into the figure of half straightened corkscrews, nearly unfit for service. The spirit of the house-wife dispossesses the bland and smiling spirit of the school-girl. The masculine candidates for matrimony can now give a shrewd guess who are endued with an innate propensity to scold; who will be Xantippes to their husbands, should they ever get their Cupid's nests made up again so as to catch them. 'Be still, Sam! bringing in snow,' screams Mary. 'Get away, boys! off out of doors, or I'll sweep you into the fire,' snaps out

Hannah, as she brushes the urchins' legs with her hemlock. 'There, take that,' screeches Margaret, as she gives a provoking lubber a knock with the broom handle, 'there, take that, and keep your wet, dirty feet, down off the seats.' The sweeping and scolding are at length done. The girls are now brushing their clothes by flapping handkerchiefs over themselves and each other. The dust is subsiding; one can almost breathe again. The master has come, all so prim in his best coat and a clean cravat, and may be, a collar is stiff and high above it. His hair is combed in its genteelest curvatures. He has returned earlier than usual, and the boys are cut short in their play—the glorious fun of the last noon-time. But they must all come in. But what shall the visitors sit on? 'Go up to Captain Clark's and borrow some chairs,' says the master. Half a dozen boys are off in a moment, and very soon more than half a dozen chairs are sailing, swinging, and clattering through the air, and are set in a row round the spelling floor.

The school are at length all seated at their books, in palpitating expectation. The master makes a speech on the importance of speaking up 'loud and distinct,' and of refraining from whispering and all other things well known to be forbidden. The writing-books and cyphering-manuscripts are all gathered and piled on the desk or the bench near it. 'Where is your manuscript, Margaret?' 'I carried it home last night.' 'Carried it home! what's that for?' 'Cause I was ashamed on't, I haven't got half so far in 'rethmetic as the rest of

the girls who cypher, I've had to stay at home so much.'

A heavy step is heard in the entry. All is hushed within. They do nothing but breathe. The door opens—it is only one of the largest boys who went home at noon. There are sleigh-bells approaching, hark, do they stop? yes, up in Captain Clark's shed. Now there is another tread, then a distinct and confident rap. The master opens the door, and the minister salutes him, and advancing, receives the simultaneous bows and courtesies of the awed ranks in front. He is seated in the most conspicuous and honourable place, perhaps in the magisterial desk. Then some of the neighbours scatter in and receive the same homage, though it is proffered with a more careless action and aspect.

Now commences the examination. First, the younger classes read and spell. Observe that little fellow as he steps from his seat to take his place on the floor. It is his day of public triumph, for he is at the head, he has been there the most times, and a ninepence swings by a flaxen string from his neck. His skin wants letting out, it will hardly hold the important young gentleman. His mother told him this morning, when he left home, 'to speak up like a minister,' and his shrill oratory is almost at the extremity of utterance.

The third class have read; they are now spelling; they are famous orthographers; the mightiest words of the spelling columns do not intimidate them. Then come the numbers, the abbreviations, and the punctuation. Some of the little throats are

almost choked by the hurried ejection of big words and stringy sentences.

The master has gone through with the several accomplishments of the class; they are about to take their seats. 'Please to let them stand a few moments longer, I should like to put out a few words to them myself,' says the minister. Now look out. They expect words as long as their finger, from the widest columns of the spelling-book, or perhaps such as are found only in the Dictionary. 'Spell wrist,' says he to the little sweller at the head. 'O what an easy word!' r-i-s-t, wrist. It is not right; the next, the next—they all try, or rather do not attempt the word, for if r-i-s-t does not spell wrist, they cannot conceive what does. 'Spell gown,' Anna.' G-o-u-n-d, 'O no, it is gown, not gound; the next must try;' but none of them can spell this; he then puts out penknife, which is spelt without the k, and then 'hand-iron,' which his honour at the head rattles off in this way, 'h-a-n-d hand i-u-r-n urn hand-iurn.

The poor little things are confused as well as discomfited; they hardly know what it means; the teacher is disconcerted and mortified; it just dawns on him that while he has been following the order of the book, and priding himself that so young scholars can spell such monstrous great words—words which perhaps they will never use, they cannot spell the names of the most familiar objects. The minister has taught *him* a lesson.

The writing books are now examined; the mighty pile is lifted from the desk, and scattered along

through the hands of the visitors. Some are commended for the neatness with which they have kept their manuscripts; some for improvement in writing; of some, probably of the majority, is said nothing at all.

Whew! softly breathed the minister, as he opened a writing-book, some of whose pages were a complete ink-souse. He looked on the outside, and Simon Patch was the name that lay sprawling in the dirt which adhered to the newspaper cover. Simon spied his book in the reverend gentleman's hands, and noticed his queer stare at it. The minister looked up; Simon shrunk and looked down, for he felt that his eye was about to seek him. He gazed intensely on the book before him, without seeing a word; at the same time earnestly sucking the pointed lapel of his Sunday coat. But Simon escaped without any audible rebuke.

Now comes the arithmetical examination: that is, the proficients in this branch are required to say the rules. Alas me! I had no reputation at all in this science. I could not repeat more than half the rules I had been over, nor more than the half of that half in the words of the book, as others could. What shame and confusion of face were mine on the last day, when we came to be questioned in arithmetic. But when Mr. Ellis had his examination, I looked up a little, and felt that I was not so utterly incompetent as my previous teachers, together with myself, had supposed.

Then came the display in grammar, our knowledge of which is especially manifested in parsing. A

piece is selected which we have parsed in the course of the school, and on which we are again drilled so as to become as familiar with the parts of speech, and the governments and agreements of them, as we are with the buttons and the button-holes of our jackets. We appear of course amazingly expert.

We exhibited our talent at reading likewise, in passages selected for the occasion, and conned over, and read over, until the dullest might call all the words right, and the most careless mind all the 'stops and marks.'

But this examination was a stupid piece of business to me, as is evident enough from this stupid account of it. The expectation and preparation were somewhat exhilarating, as I trust has been perceived; but as soon as the anticipated scene had commenced, it grew dull, and still more dull, just like this chapter.

But let us finish this examination now we are about it; suppose it finished then. The minister remarks to the teacher, 'your school appears very well in general, Sir;' then he makes a speech, then a prayer, and his business is done. So is that of school-master and school. 'You are dismissed,' is uttered for the last time this season. It is almost dark, and but little time left for a last trip up, snow-ball, or slide down hill. The little boys and girls, with their books and dinner-baskets, ride home with their parents, if they happen to be there. The larger ones have some last words, and laughs together, and then they leave the old school-house till December comes round again.

My first sentence was about the old school-house, so shall be my last. The declining condition in which we first found it, has waxed into exceeding infirmity by the changes of thirteen years. After the summer school succeeding my thirteenth winter of district education, it was sold and carried piecemeal away, ceasing for ever from the form and name of school-house.

I would have my readers see how the long-used and hard-used fabric appeared, and how near to dissolution it came before the district could agree to accommodate their children with a new one.

We will now suppose it my last winter at our school. Here we are inside, let us look around a little.

The long writing-benches arrest our attention as forcibly as anything in sight. They were originally of substantial plank, an inch and a half thick; and it is well that they were thus massive: no board of ordinary measure would have stood the hackings and hewings, the scrapings and borings which have been inflicted on those sturdy planks. In the first place, the edge next the scholar is notched from end to end, presenting an appearance something like a broken-toothed mill-saw. Upon the upper surface there has been carved or pictured with ink, the likeness of all things in the heavens and on earth, ever beheld by a country school-boy, and sundry guesses at things he never did see. Fifty years has this poor timber been subjected to the knives of idlers, and almost the fourth of fifty I have hacked on them myself; and by this last

winter their width has become diminished nearly one half. There are, moreover, innumerable writings on the benches and ceilings. On the boy's side were scribbled the names of the Hannahs, the Marys, and the Harriets, toward whom young hearts were beginning to soften in the first gentle meltings of love. One would suppose that a certain Harriet A. was the most distinguished belle the district has ever produced, from the frequency of her name on bench and wall.

The cracked and patched and puttied windows are now still more diversified by here and there a square of board instead of glass.

The master's desk is in pretty good order. The first one was knocked over in a noon-time scuffle, and so completely shattered as to render a new one necessary. This has stood about ten years.

As to the floor, had it been some winters we could not have seen it without considerable scraping away of dust and various kinds of litter; for a broom was not always provided, and boys would not wallow in the snow after hemlock, and sweeping could not so well be done with a stick. This winter, however, Mr. Ellis takes care that the floor shall be visible the greater part of the time. It is rough with sundry patches of board nailed over chinks and knot-holes made by the wear and tear of years.

Now we will look at the fire-place. One end of the hearth has sunk an inch and a half below the floor. There are crevices between some of the tiles, into which coals of fire sometimes drop and

smoke up and make the boys spring for snow. The hand-irons have each lost a fore-foot, and the office of the important member is supplied by bricks which had been dislodged from the chimney-top. The fire-shovel has acquired by accident or age a venerable stoop. The tongs can no longer be called a pair, for the lack of one of the fellow-limbs. That bar of iron running from jamb to jamb in front, how it is bent and sinking in the middle, by the pressure of the swagging fabric above. Indeed the whole chimney is quite ruinous. The bricks are loose here and there in the vicinity of the fire-place; and the chimney-top has lost so much of its cement that every high wind dashes off a brick, rolling and sliding on the roof, and then tumbling to the ground, to the danger of cracking whatever heedless skull may happen to be in the way.

The window-shutters, after having shattered the glass by the slams of many years, have broken their own backs at length. Some have fallen to the ground, and are going the way of all things perishable. Others hang by a single hinge, which is likely to give way at the next high gale, and consign the dangling shutter to the company of its fellows below.

The clapboards are here and there loose, and dropping one by one from their fastenings. One of these thin and narrow appendages, sticking by a nail at one end, and loose and shivered at the other, sends forth the most ear-rending music to the skilful touches of the north-west. In allusion to the soft-toned instrument of Æolus it may be termed

the Borean harp. Indeed so many are the avenues by which the wind passes in and out, and so various are the notes, according as the rushing air vibrates a splinter, makes the windows clatter, whistles through a knot-hole, and rumbles like big base down the chimney, that the edifice may be imagined uproarious winter's Panharmonicon,[1] played upon in turns by all the winds.

Such is the condition of the old school-house, supposing it to be just before we leave it for ever, at the close of my thirteenth and last winter at our district school. It has been resorted to summer after summer, and winter after winter, although the observation of parents and the sensations of children have long given evidence that it ought to be abandoned.

At every meeting on school affairs that has been held for several years, the question of a new school-house has been discussed. All agree on the urgent need of one, and all are willing to contribute their portion of the wherewith ; but when they attempt to decide on its location, then their harmonious action is at an end. All know that this high bleak hill, the coldest spot within a mile, is not the place ; it would be stupid folly to put it here. At the foot of the hill on either side is as snug and pleasant a spot as need be. But the east-enders will not permit its location on the opposite side, and the west-enders are as obstinate on their part. Each division declares that it will secede and form a separate

[1] The Panharmonicon is a large instrument in which the peculiar tones of several smaller instruments are combined.

district should it be carried further off, although in this case they must put up with much cheaper teachers, or much less schooling, or submit to twice the taxes.

Thus they have tossed the ball of discussion, and sometimes hurled that of contention back and forth, year after year, to just about as much profit, as their children have flung snow-balls in play, or chips and cakes of ice when provoked. At length Time, the final decider of all things material, wearied with their jars, is likely to end them by tumbling the old ruin about their ears.

Months have passed; it is near winter again. There is great rejoicing among the children, satisfaction among the parents, harmony between the two ends. A new school-house has been erected at last—indeed it has. A door of reconciliation and mutual adjustment was opened in the following manner.

That powerful, but somewhat tardy personage the Public, began to be weary of ascending and descending Captain Clark's hill. He began to calculate the value of time and horseflesh. One day it occurred to him that it would be as 'cheap and indeed much cheaper,' to go round this hill at the bottom than to go round it over the top; for it is just as far from side to side of a ball in one direction as in another, and this was a case somewhat similar. He perceived that there would be no more gained in the long run by the expense of carrying the road an eighth of a mile to the south and all on level ground,

than there would be by still wasting the breath of horse and the patience of man in panting up and tottering down this monstrous hill. It seemed as if he had been blind for years, not to have conceived of the improvement before. No time was to be lost now. He lifted up his many-tongued voice, and put forth his many-handed strength, and in the process of a few months a road was constructed, curving round the south side of the aforesaid hill, which, after all, proved to be but a few rods longer from point to point, than the other.

The district were no longer at variance about the long-needed edifice. The afore-mentioned improvement had scarcely been decided on, before every one perceived how the matter might be settled. A school-meeting was soon called, and it was unanimously agreed to erect a new school-house on the new road, almost exactly opposite the old spot, and as equidistant from the two ends, it was believed, as the equator is from the poles.

Here Mr. Henry *taught* the District School somewhat as it should be; and it has never since been *kept* as it was.

CHAPTER X.

THE VILLAGE CHOIR.

WISHING to present a sketch of manners in New England, and of some changes that have occurred in our taste for sacred music, I have presumed to adopt for the purpose, a kind of desultory narrative.

Many years had now elapsed since any interruption, or indeed anything extraordinary had happened to the music, which was barely tolerated in the meeting-house at Waterfield. At the period when our memoirs commence, the long-established leader, Mr. Pitchtone, had just removed with his family to one of the new towns in the district of Maine, and the choir, which had been for some time in a decaying state, was thus left without any head, or any hope of keeping itself together. For some Sundays after his departure, not an individual ventured to appear in the singing seats. Young Williams, the eccentric and interesting shoemaker, who was an apprentice to his father, knew perfectly well how to set the tune, but he had not as yet acquired sufficient self-confidence to pass the leading notes round to the performers of different parts,

nor to encounter various other kinds of intimidating notoriety attached to the office. The female singers, besides, had been so long and so implicitly accustomed to their late leader, that nothing could have induced them to submit to the control of so young and inexperienced a guide. And as no other member of the congregation possessed sufficient skill or firmness to undertake this responsible and conspicuous task, the consequence was, that nearly all the performers at first absented themselves, not only from the singing-gallery, but even from church. Most of them had been so long habituated to their elevated position, and their active duty in the place of worship, that they could not immediately undergo the awkwardness of sitting below among the congregation, and were not a little apprehensive of meeting the stares of mingled curiosity and reproach, which they knew would be directed towards them. In addition to these circumstances, many had not the heart to witness the embarrassment and pain which would naturally be created in the minister and his flock, by the anticipated chasm in the usual routine of worship. Two or three, however, of the most courageous in the late choir, ventured to attend church even on the first sabbath after the removal of Mr. Pitchtone. They went, indeed, at a very early hour, for the purpose of avoiding notice, and took their seats in some unappropriated pews in a very distant, and almost invisible quarter of the gallery.

The entire congregation having assembled, the clergyman waited some time for the accustomed

appearance of the sons and daughters of sacred song. It is almost universally the practice throughout our New England country churches, to commence public worship with the singing of a psalm or hymn. On the present occasion, no person being apparently ready to perform that duty, the minister began the services with the 'long prayer.' Yet, when this was concluded, an imperious necessity occurred, of making at least the attempt to diversify and animate the business of the sanctuary, by an act of melody. Accordingly the Rev. Mr. Welby announced and read the psalm adapted to the subject of the sermon which was to succeed; then having waited a moment or two, during which a most painful silence and suspense pervaded the congregation, he began, in a voice naturally strong and clear, to sing the psalm alone, still keeping his usual standing position in the centre of the pulpit. Only one voice was heard to support him; it was that of the venerable deacon who sat immediately beneath, and who hummed a broken kind of bass, without the accompaniment of words, there being scarcely a hymn-book in the lower part of the meeting-house. The same scene occurred in the afternoon, with the slight addition of a female voice in some part of the house, which lent its modest, unskilful, and half-suppressed assistance through the concluding portion of the hymn.

Matters went on nearly in this way for the space of a month, at the end of which, the singing began to improve a little, by the gradual return to church, though not to the singing-gallery, of the stragglers

who had composed the late choir, and who were now willing to join in the vocal duties of worship, under the auspices of the pastor. At length, when about six months had been thus dragged along, an occasion offered for a return to the deserted orchestra, in a manner which might somewhat shelter the mortification, and inspire the confidence of the rallied choristers.

A Mr. Ebed Harrington, who had recently removed into the village for the purpose of studying medicine with the physician of the place, had some pretensions on the musical score. He was an unmarried man, of about the age of thirty years, and had been until this period, a hard-working labourer on his father's farm, which was situated in an obscure township in New Hampshire. His complexion was of the darkest, his face exactly circular, his eyes small, black, and unmeaning, his form thickset, and the joints of his principal limbs had been contracted by nature or use, into inflexible angles of considerable acuteness. He defrayed the expences of his board and medical tuition, by labouring agriculturally the half of every day, for his teacher, Dr. Saddlebags; the other half of the day, and a large portion of the night, were industriously devoted by our incipient Esculapius to the study of his new-chosen profession, with the exception of a few evenings which he occasionally spent at different places in the neighbourhood. It was on one of these visits that he found means to exhibit some imposing specimens of his abilities in the performance of sacred music. And having mentioned

that he had often taken the lead in the choir of his native parish, he almost immediately received a pressing invitation from some of the most active of the singers in Waterfield to place himself at their head on the following sabbath, and thus enable them to supply the lamented vacancy which existed in the apparatus of worship at their meeting-house.

The invitation was accepted; that quarter of the singing-seats devoted to the female sex, was filled at an early hour on the next sabbath morning by fair occupants, furnished generally each with her hymn-book, and waiting with some impatience for the other moiety of the choir to arrive, and for the services to begin. The body of male performers gradually assembled at one corner of the building, out of doors, and discussed several particulars relating to the important movement which was now about to take place. One difficulty that staggered the most of them, was the manner in which Mr. Ebed Harrington, their new precentor, should be introduced into the singing-gallery. He himself modestly suggested the propriety of being conducted by some one of the gentlemen singers to the spot. But besides that there was not an individual in the circle who conceived himself clothed with sufficient authority, or who felt sufficient confidence in himself, to enact so grave a ceremony, it appeared to be the general opinion, that Mr. Harrington, in virtue of his newly-conferred office, should march into church at the head of the choir. While they were debating this point with no little earnestness, the time was sliding rapidly away; all the rest

of the congregation, even to the last tardy straggler, had entered and taken their seats. An impatient and wondering stillness mantled over the whole assemblage within, and Mr. Welby was on the point of rising to announce the psalm, at the hazard of whatever consequences might ensue, when, by a sudden, spontaneous, and panic-like movement, which I cannot remember who of us began, the tuneful collection without suspended their debate, and rushed in a body into the front door of the meeting-house. Part of us turned off immediately into the right aisle, and part into the left. The stairs leading to the gallery were placed at the end of each of these aisles, at two corners of the building within, so that whoever mounted them was exposed to the view of the congregation. With a hurried and most earnest solemnity the choristers made their trampling way up these stairs, and soon found themselves in a large octagonal pew in the centre of the front gallery. Each individual occupied the seat which he could first reach, and Mr. Harrington, without being offered the post of honour usually assigned the leader, was fain in the general confusion and forgetfulness of the scene, to assume about four inches of the edge of a bench contiguous to the door of the pew. Here, while wiping from his brow with a red dotted calico handkerchief, the perspiration which the anxieties and exertions of the moment had profusely excited, the voice of the clergyman in the pulpit restored him and his fellow-singers to the calm of recollection, and fixed all eyes around upon him as their legitimate guide.

The tune which he selected was well adapted to the hymn announced. Every body remembers 'Wells.' Mr. Harrington had forgotten to take a pitchpipe with him to the place of worship, and there was accidentally no instrument of any kind present. He was therefore obliged to trust to his ear or rather to his fortune for the pitch of the leading note. The fourth note in the tune of Wells happens to be an octave above the first. Unluckily, Mr. Harrington seized upon a pitch better adapted to this fourth note than to the first. The consequence was, that in leading off the tune, to the words of 'Life is the time,' he executed the three first notes with considerable correctness, though with not a little straining, but in attempting to pronounce the word *time*, he found that nature had failed to accommodate his voice with a sound sufficiently high for the purpose. The rest of the tenor voices were surprised into the same consciousness. Here then he was brought to an absolute stand, and with him, the whole choir, with the exception of two or three of the most ardent singers of the bass and treble, whose enthusiasm and earnestness carried them forward nearly through the first line, before they perceived the calamity which had befallen their head-quarters. They now reluctantly suffered their voices one after another to drop away, and a dead silence of a moment ensued. Mr. Harrington began again, with a somewhat lower pitch of voice, and with stepping his feet a little back, as if to leap forward to some imaginary point; but still with no greater success.

A similar catastrophe to the former, awaited this second attempt. The true sound for the word *time*, still remained far beyond the utmost reach of his falsetto. In his third effort, he was more fortunate, since he hit upon a leading note, which brought the execution of the whole tune just within the compass of possibility, and the entire six verses were discussed with much spirit and harmony. When the hymn was finished, the leader and several of his more intimate acquaintances exchanged nods and smiles with each other, compounded of mortification and triumph—mortification at the mistakes with which the singing had begun, and triumph at the spirited manner in which it was carried on and concluded. This foolish and wicked practice is indulged in too many choirs, by some of the leading singers, who ought to set a better example to their fellow choristers, and compose themselves into other than giggling and winking frames of mind at the moment when a whole congregation is about to rise or kneel in a solemn act of praise and prayer.

The greater part of the interval between the first and second singing, which was occupied by the minister and the devout portion of his hearers in a high and solemn communion with the Deity, was devoted by Mr. Harrington and his associates above-mentioned, to turning over the leaves of the Village Harmony, and making a conditional choice of the tune next to be performed, according to the metre of the hymn which might be read. When the time arrived for their second performance, although Mr. Harrington was more happy than

before, in catching the true key-note of the air, yet either from some deficiency of science in himself, or from a misapprehension on the part of those who sang bass, this important department of the choir began the hymn with a note which happened to be the most discordant of the whole scale. The consequence was dreadful to every one within hearing, who was afflicted with a good ear. Our Coryphæus interposed his authority to produce silence, by emitting through his teeth a loud and protracted Hush! After some little difficulty, they succeeded in starting fairly, and carried on the performance with due harmony of tones.

In the afternoon, Mr. Harrington was at his post as settled leader of the choir. It is true that he found himself surrounded by only about half the number of assistants who had attended the commencement of his vocal career in the morning. But no one had ventured to insinuate to him his incompetency, and several of the singers charitably ascribed his mistakes to the accidental absence of the pitchpipe, and to the modest trepidation which naturally arose from his first appearance. His principal mistake on the latter part of the day, was that of selecting a common metre tune which ought to have been one in long metre. He perceived not his error, until he arrived at the end of the second line, when, finding that he had yet two more syllables to render into music, he at first attempted to eke out the air by a kind of flourish of his own, in a suppressed and hesitating voice. But he was soon convinced that this would never do. Had he

been entirely alone, he might in this way have carried the hymn through, trusting to his own musical resources and invention. But it was out of his power to inspire the other singers with the foreknowledge of the exact notes which his genius might devise and append to every second line. They, too, must try their skill to the same purpose, and while the whole choir, tenor, bass, and treble, were each endeavouring to eke out the line with their own efforts and happy flourishes, a tremendous clash of discord and chaos of uncertainty involved both the leaders and the led together. There was nothing in this dilemma, therefore, for him to do, except to stop short at once, and select a new tune. This he did with much promptness and apparent composure, though that there was some little flutter in his bosom, was evident from the circumstance that the tune he again pitched upon, contrary to all rules in the course of a single Sabbath, was 'Wells,'—which, however, went off with much propriety, and with none of the interruptions that had marred its performance in the morning.

There are many of the thorough-bred sons of New England, whose perseverance it takes much greater discouragements to daunt, than befel the precentorial efforts of Mr. Ebed Harrington on this memorable day. He regarded himself now as the fully instated leader of the choir in Waterfield; a function which he inflexibly maintained through good report and through evil report, sometimes amidst almost entire desertion, and at other times with a very respectable band to follow his guidance,

until his professional studies were completed, and he himself removed from the neighbourhood, to plunge into some of the newly-settled territories for an establishment, and introduce, perchance, the arts of healing and melody together. I have never heard one word of his destination or subsequent success.

The musical concerns of our parish were not involved in the same embarrassment after his departure, as after that of his predecessor.

Young Williams had now increased in years, skill, and confidence. Nature had destined him to be a passionate votary of music. He was scarcely out of mere boyhood, before he grasped the violoncello, or, as we term it in New England, the bass-viol, with a kind of preternatural adroitness, and clung to it with a devoted and ardent perseverance, which very soon rendered him an accomplished performer. Every leisure hour, every leisure moment he could seize, was employed on this his favourite instrument. The first ray of morning was welcomed by the vibrations of its memnonian strings. Many a meal was cheerfully foregone, that he might feed his ear and his soul with the more etherial food to which his desires tended. Often too were his musical exercises protracted far beyond midnight, to the annoyance at first of his father's family, who soon however could sleep as well beneath the sounds of the lad's violoncello, as if an Æolian harp were soothingly ringing all night at their windows. As he sat in the solitude of his chamber, a solitude sweetened by his own exquisite skill and the indul-

gence of his fond taste, he regarded not the cold of winter, and not always the darkness of the night. He speedily made himself master of his darling science, as far as such an attainment was possible from the introductions to all the compilations of music within his reach, from Dobson's Encyclopedia, and from such other appropriate books as the Waterfield Social Library, and Mr. Welby's humble collection of miscellaneous literature might supply. His performance was the admiration of all the country round. His father's house was frequently visited for the single purpose of witnessing the display of his uncommon talents. Most willingly did he exhibit his powers before the representative to congress, or Mr. Welby and his family, or a bevy of admiring girls, or a half dozen ragged children, who were attracted from their plays in the streets and the fields, to be soothed, and charmed, and civilized into silence by our self-taught Orpheus. Written notes before him were but a skeleton, which he not merely clothed with a body and animated with a life, but into which he infused a soul and an inspiration that none but the rarest geniuses on earth can cause to exist.

Such was the temporary successor to Mr. or now, more properly speaking, Dr. Ebed Harrington, in the government of the sacred choir at Waterfield. Charles Williams, as I have before observed, was as yet too young to take the lead in the melodious department of public worship, when that interesting and uncouth personage came to reside in the village.

But it is very questionable whether the pretensions of the latter to his honourable office in the gallery would ever have been submitted to, during the two years that he remained, had he been destitute of the assistance rendered him by the musical young Crispin whom I have just introduced to my readers. Charles had been almost constantly at his post as leader of the bass, and performer on the violoncello.

On his elevation to the seat of leader of the choir, new life was infused into the whole vocal company. Years had done something for him since the period at which our history commences, but experience and the opening native energy of his mind had done much more. Implicit confidence was now reposed in his skill and management, even by the shyest member of the choir. He had occasionally supplied the accidental absence of Mr. Harrington, and had been constantly consulted by that gentleman with peculiar deference in all the business, and mystery, and apparatus, incident to the due administration of his office. It was even whispered round in the singing pews, that Charles had often been happily instrumental in correcting or preventing several blunders on the part of his superior, not unlike those which I before recorded as distinguishing the outset of that gentleman's career.

With such qualifications, and such a reputation, Mr. Williams entered upon his dignities with the highest spirit and the best prospects of success. The choir was instantly replenished by all the old

deserters and by many new recruits. Singing meetings were appointed in private houses on two or three evenings of each week for the purpose of practice and improvement. A large supply of the (then) last edition of the Village Harmony was procured, and the stock of good pieces, which all might familiarly sing, was enlarged. The whole number of performers was about fifty. This was one of those happy and brilliant periods which all our New England churches occasionally enjoy for a longer or shorter term in the musical department of the sacred exercises. I will not contend that the psalms now went off with much science or expression. Charles Williams was fully equal to the task of infusing the best possible taste in these respects into the choir which he led. But he wisely felt that his authority did not extend quite so far at present as to warrant the attempt to introduce among them any nice innovations on the old-fashioned manner of vocal performance. He was not their teacher in the art. He was only one of themselves, and all he could expect to do, was to yield himself to the general stream of musical taste and prejudice, with the exception of such little improvements as he hoped to effect by his sole example, or the communication of his ideas in private to some particular friends. He accordingly began and executed the most galloping fugues and the most unexpressive airs with the same spirit and alacrity that he would have expended on the divinest strains of sacred music.

Notwithstanding, however, these slight unavoid-

able deficiencies, the present was, as I observed, a bright and happy period in the meeting-house at Waterfield. There was a full choir. It was punctual in its attendance at church. The singing, though a little noisy, was at least generally correct in time and tone. A new anthem was gotten up at the recurrence of each fast and thanksgiving-day, and funeral anthems were sung on the Sabbath that immediately succeeded any interment in the parish. There are few who will not acknowledge the luxury of such a state of things, when compared with the necessity of enduring, Sabbath after Sabbath, a feeble, poor, discordant band of singers, or listening to the performance of two or three scattered individuals among the congregation, who go through their duty with reluctance, and seem not so much to be singing praises, as offering up substitutes and apologies.

Far different from such a picture were the achievements of our renovated choir. Every tune which they performed seemed to be a triumph over the preceding. Charles Williams was so much in his element that he inspired all around him with the same feeling.

It is true, there were some peculiarities in the manners and customs of the choir, to which a fastidious stranger might object. In warm weather, Charles assumed the liberty of laying aside his coat, and exhibiting the perfection to which his sisters could bleach his linen, in which practice he was supported by about half the men-singers present. Another exceptionable habit prevailed among us.

As soon as the hymn was read, and those ominous preluding notes distributed round, which come before the performance of a psalm-tune like scattering drops before a shower, that portion of the band, which sat in front of the gallery, suddenly arose, wheeled their backs round to the audience below, and commenced operations with all possible earnestness and ardour. Thus the only part of the congregation which they faced, consisted of those who sat in the range of pews which ran along behind the singing seats.

It was somewhat unnecessary, moreover, that each individual performer should beat time on his own account. But this was a habit of inveterate standing in the church, which nothing short of the omnipotent voice of fashion could be hoped to frighten away. That voice was not yet heard to this effect in the singing-gallery at Waterfield. But it would have cost many an occupant there a pang to resign the privilege of this little display. Let Mr. D'Israeli and the editor of Blackwood's Magazine inspect the dispositions of men in their hand-writing. But as a school for the study of character, give *me* a choir of singers, who are in the habit of beating time each for himself. How could the most superficial observer mistake these characteristic symptoms? Here and there you might see a hand ostentatiously and unshrinkingly lifted above all surrounding heads, like the sublime and regular recurrence of a windmill's wings. Some performers there were, who studied an inexpressible and inimitable grace in every modification of motion to

which they subjected their finger-joints, wrists, elbows, shoulders, and bodies. Some tossed the limb up and down with an energy that seemed to be resenting an affront. Others were so gentle in their vibrations, that they appeared afraid of disturbing the serenity of the circumambient air. Some hands swept a full segment of one hundred and eighty degrees; others scarcely advanced farther than the minute-hand of a stop-watch at a single pulsation. The young student at law, the merchant's clerk, and a few others whom fortune had exempted from the primeval malediction of personal toil, were at once recognised by the easy freedom with which they waved a hand that no sun had browned, and the contact of no agricultural implement had roughened. If, as we have seen, some of the singers were ostentatious in wielding an arm to its full extent, others were equally ostentatious in using only a finger, or a thumb and middle finger joined. To the honour of the choir, however, be it said, that there were several of its members who performed the duty, which was then customary, of beating time, without any effort or affectation. It should also be ascribed to nothing more than a sense of propriety and laudable modesty, that a great part of the female singers kept time in no other way than by moving a fore-finger which hung down at their sides, and was almost concealed amidst large folds of changeable silk, or of glazed coloured cotton cambric. To this a few of them added a slight motion of the head or body, while some of the married ladies openly raised and

lowered their hands upon the hymn books from which they sang.

In addition to the foregoing general imperfections which prevented the congregation at Waterfield from witnessing the *beau ideal* of a sacred choir, it is to be lamented that there were others which resulted not from common custom, but from individual peculiarities. The taste and knowledge of music, among all the performers, were far from being uniform. While some sang with great beauty of expression, and a nice adjustment to the sentiment of the happy modulations of a flexible voice, others made no more distinction between the different notes, than did the printed singing-book itself, or any lifeless instrument that gives out the tone required with the same strength and the same unvaried uniformity on all occasions. Nothing, too, could be rougher than the stentorian voice of Mr. Broadbreast, and nothing more piercing than the continued shriek of the pale, but enthusiastic Miss Sixfoot. I shall not disclose the name of the good man who annoyed us a little with his ultra-nasal twang, nor of another, who, whenever he took the true pitch, did so by a happy accident; nor of another who had an ungainly trick of catching his breath violently at every third note; nor of several of both sexes, whose pronunciation of many words, particularly of *how*, *now*, &c. was dreadfully rustic, and hardly to be expressed on paper. Jonathan Oxgoad sang indeed much too loud, but that could have been forgiven him, had he not perpetually forgotten what verses were directed by the minister

to be omitted; a neglect, which, before he discovered his error, often led him half through an interdicted verse, much to the annoyance of the worthy pastor, the confusion of his fellow-singers, the vexation of the congregation, and the amusement and gratification of Jonathan's too good-natured friends.

There was also a culpable neglect among the male singers, in providing themselves with a sufficient number of hymn books. That it was not so on the other side of the choir, was partly owing to the delicate tact of women, which never suffers them to violate even the minor proprieties of time and place, and partly to their greater attachment to religion. As, in our New England churches generally, we have no prayer-books to serve as a kind of endearing bond between the public and domestic altar, the vivid imagination and tender affection of the female singer, caused her to cherish her hymn book in such a connection. The more rough, careless, and indifferent habits of our own sex, render us less attentive to these sensible memorials for the heart; accordingly, in our choir, among the men, the proportion of books was scarcely more than one to four or five performers, so that you might often hear some ardent and confident individual, who was stationed too far from the page to read distinctly, attempting to make out the sentence from his own imagination, or, when he despaired of achieving that aim, filling up the line with uncouth and unheard-of syllables, or with inarticulate sounds. It is strange how some little inconveniences of this kind

will be borne for a long time without an effort made for their remedy. It was not avarice which caused this deficiency of hymn books ; far from it ; it was only the endurance of an old custom, which it occurred to no one to take the proper steps to remove. Was it not thirty years that uncle Toby threatened every day to oil the creaking hinge that gave him so much anguish of soul, and threatened in vain ?

But I will no longer contemplate the shady points of my picture. On the whole, the blemishes just described, were scarce ever offensively perceptible, when compared with the general merit with which the singing was conducted and continued to improve for the space of two or three years. Besides, our supply of good music, was equal or superior to the demand. Be it remembered that we were singing within wooden walls to the edification of an American country congregation, who sprang unmixed from puritanical ancestors, and not beneath the dome of an European metropolitan cathedral.

It is impossible to look back without some of the animation of triumph upon those golden hours of my early manhood, when I stood among friends and acquaintances, and we all started off with the keenest alacrity in some favourite air, that made the roof of our native church resound, and caused the distant, though unfrequent traveller to pause upon his way, for the purpose of more distinctly catching the swelling and dying sounds that waved over the hills, and reverberated from wood to wood. The grand and rolling bass of Charles Williams's

viol, beneath which the very floor was felt to tremble, was surmounted by the strong, rich, and exquisite tenor of his own matchless voice. And oh! at the turning of a fugue, when the bass moved forward first, like the opening fire of artillery, and the tenor advanced next, like a corps of grenadiers, and the treble followed on with the brilliant execution of infantry, and the trumpet counter shot by the whole, with the speed of darting cavalry, and then, when we all mingled in that battle of harmony and melody, and mysteriously fought our way through each verse with a well ordered perplexity, which made the audience wonder how we ever came out exactly together, (which once in a while, indeed, owing to some strange surprise or lingering among the treble, we failed to do,) the sensations that agitated me at those moments, have rarely been equalled during the monotonous pilgrimage of my life.

And yet, when I remember how little we kept in view the main and real object of sacred music—when I think how much we sang to the praise and honor and glory of our inflated selves alone—when I reflect that the majority of us absolutely did not intend that any other ear in the universe should listen to our performances, save those of the admiring human audience below and around us—I am inclined to feel more shame and regret than pleasure at these youthful recollections, and must now be permitted to indulge for a few pages in a more serious train.

How large and dreadful is the account against numberless ostensible Christian worshippers in this

respect! And how decisive might be the triumph of the Roman Catholics over Protestants, if they chose to urge it in this quarter! They might demand of us, what we have gained by greater simplicity and abstractness of forms. They might ask, whether it is not equally abominable in the sight of Jehovah, that music should be abused in his sanctuary, as that pictures and images should be perverted from their original design? For my part, I conscientiously think that there is more piety, more of the spirit of true religion, in the idolatory which kneels in mistaken, though heartfelt gratitude to a sculptured image, than in the deliberate mockery which sends up solemn sounds from thoughtless tongues. How often does what is called sacred music, administer only to the vanity of the performer and the gratification of the hearer, who thus, as it were, themselves inhale the incense which they are solemnly wafting, though they have full enough need that it should ascend and find favor for them with the Searcher of all Hearts!

This is a rock of temptation which the Quakers have avoided; in dispensing with the inspiration of song, they at least shun its abuses; and if they really succeed in filling their hour with intense religious meditation and spiritual communion—if, from their still retreat, the waves of this boisterous world are excluded, and send thither no disturbing ripple—if no calculations of interest, and no sanguine plans are there prosecuted, and no hopes, nor fears, nor regrets, nor triumphs, nor recollections, nor any other flowers that grow this side of the grave,

are gathered and pressed to the bosom, on the margin of those quiet waters—if, in short, the very silence and vacancy of the scene are not too much for the feeble heart of man, which, if deprived of the stay of external things, will either fall back on itself, or else will rove to the world's end to expend its restless activity in a field of chaotic imaginations; —if, I say, the Quakers are so happy as to escape these perils, together with the seductions to vanity and self-gratification which music and preaching present, then must their worship, I think, be the purest of all worship, and their absence of exterior forms the very perfection of all forms. But, let me ask of thee, my heart, whether *thou* couldst fulfil the above severe conditions? Wouldst thou no longer obtrusively beat and ache beneath the external serenity of a Quaker's composed demeanor, and unmodish apparel, and voiceless celebration? Thou shrinkest from the trial, and art still convinced that the road in which thou canst best be trained for Heaven, lies somewhere at an equal distance between the bewildering magnificence of the Romish ritual, and the barren simplicity of silent worship.

I have long doubted whether, in the prevailing musical customs among our New England Independent churches, there be not something more unfavorable to the cause and progress of pure devotion, than can be charged against many other popular denominations. The Methodist, and the strict Presbyterian, have no separate choirs. They have not yet succeeded so far in the division of spiritual labor, as to delegate to others the business of praise,

or to worship God by proxy. I have often witnessed a congregation of one thousand Methodists, as they rose simultaneously from their seats, and following the officiating minister, who gave out the hymn in portions of two lines, joined all together in some simple air, which expressed the very soul of natural music. I could see no lips closed as far as I could direct my vision, nor could I hear one note of discord uttered. Was it that the heartiness and earnestness which animated the whole throng, inspired even each tuneless individual with powers not usually his own, and sympathetically dragged into the general stream of harmony, those voices which were not guided by a musical ear? or was it, that the overwhelming majority of good voices, such as, I presume, if exerted, would prevail in every congregation, drowned the imperfect tones, and the occasional inaccuracies of execution, which most probably existed? It did not offend me that they sang with all their might, and all their soul, and all their strength; for it was evident that they sang with all their heart. I was conscious of hearing only one grand and rolling volume of sound, which swallowed up minor asperities and individual peculiarities. This was particularly the case after two or three verses were sung, when the congregation had been wrought into a kind of movement of inspiration. Then the strains came to my ear with the sublimity of a rushing mighty torrent, and with an added beauty of melody that the waters cannot give. The language was still distinctly intelligible, and the time perfectly preserved. And although, when I retired

from the scene, I could not say how expressively this chorister had sung, nor how exquisitely the other had trilled, nor could compliment a single lady on her golden tones, nor criticise the fine science of the counterpoint, yet I felt that I had been thrilled and affected in a better way, and could not but wish that what was really to be approved of among the Methodists, might be imitated in those happier churches, where religion is cultivated without protracting her orgies into midnight, and cordially embraced without the necessity of delirious screams, and apopletic swoons.

Perhaps it may be thought that the good old Presbyterian way of accompanying a clerk, or precentor, who is stationed beneath the pulpit, in front of the congregation, will most generally secure the true spirit and perfection of sacred music. Born and nurtured an Independent as I am, I confess that I sometimes feel inclined to the adoption of this opinion, with a few additions and modifications. There is certainly an advantage in imposing upon a single individual the business of leading the melodious part of public devotion. It must necessarily constrain the congregation to unite their voices with his, unless they are totally lost to all sense of the proprieties of the sanctuary. This custom, moreover, must exclude those miserable feuds and other sources of interruption, which will always to a greater or less degree disturb a separately constituted choir.

But in conceding thus much to the children of the Westminster Assembly, I would beg leave to be strenuous in insisting upon a recommendation that

may appear very strange as coming from a disciple of John Robinson. I cannot find it in my soul to dispense with the glorious majesty of sound with which an organ fills the house of prayer. In the tones of this sublime trophy of human skill, there is something that wondrously accords with the sentiment of piety. We know that martial bravery, love, joy, and other feelings of our nature, have each their peculiar and stirring instruments of sound. The connexion between religion and the organ, too, is something more than fanciful. Who has not felt at once inspired and subdued by the voice issuing from that gilded little sanctuary, which towers in architectural elegance over the solemn assembly below, and seems to enshrine the presiding genius of devotional praise?

I am aware that even the united aid of a precentor and organ are insufficient to check certain tendencies to the decline of good singing, which may insidiously creep into a whole musical congregation with the lapse of time. Tunes, it may be said, grow old, and weary the ear; wretched voices may prevail over the better sort; in one pew, a worshipper may always sing the tenor part in a voice of the deepest bass; in another pew, every psalm may be screamed through with one whole note out of the way; a devotion like that of the Methodists, which often seems to make them sing decently in spite of themselves, must not be expected to continue long; a fashion of indifference towards this department of worship may arise and prevail; and especially the extensive cultivation of

secular music in private families may render very many ears so fastidious, as absolutely to frustrate the object of sacred music at church, since the tasteless and indiscriminate clamor necessarily produced by the voices of a mixed congregation, must tend to excite in the more refined classes a disgusted and indevout spirit, rather than the sweet and lofty aspirations of choral praise. On all these accounts it may possibly be argued, that our later ancestors have done well in withdrawing from the general congregation the performance of this service, and assigning it to a select choir, who, by concentrating their efforts, and reducing the matter to something of a profession, may keep the stream of sacred song at least pure, though small.

Nearly all the above sinister tendencies, however, might, I apprehend, be counteracted by the application of a little care and system. To prevent the repetition of old tunes from palling on the ear, a new one might occasionally be introduced by the clerk, and sung every Sabbath until the congregation were familiar with it. The affliction caused by bad voices might be disposed of by the appointment of a musical censor, or standing committee, whose duty it should be, to exercise now and then an act of delicate authority, acquainting the well-meaning offenders with the fact of their vocal disability, and requesting from them in future an edifying silence. As to the decay of devotion, and the increase of indifference among a congregation, these appear to me to be far from good reasons for establishing a separate choir, and are rather proofs that such a

choir will effect no sort of good. With respect to the last evil which a select choir is supposed to avoid, the fastidiousness occasioned by the private and profane cultivation of musical taste, I know not why a whole congregation, or at least all the efficient voices in it, may not be systematically taught good church music, and the best and purest taste be made general among them.

But I will candidly allow that some of these schemes of improvement are rather visionary than practical. Sitting at home in one's study, one can easily devise remedies for existing social defects, but in attempting to put them into execution, the science of human nature is found to be ten times more embarrassing than hydrostatics itself. Some obstinate pressure from an unsuspected quarter may burst over the feeble mounds which we are fondly erecting about an imaginary reservoir of beauty and tranquillity. It is a very enchanting employment of the mind to draw sketches of a kind of abstract congregation, where every one present joins in the prayer, and listens profitably to the sermon, and keeps constantly awake, and takes devout part in the psalmody, and where no eye is suffered to wander, nor attention to flag, nor worldly dreams to intrude. But where is there such a congregation on earth? And would even a Handel succeed in tutoring a mixed audience into a celestial choir of angels? On these accounts, I am not disposed to push my censures on my native communion too far. Perhaps novelty and imagination have done a little in recommending to me the practices of

other churches, and if I were familiar with the whole history of their musical condition, I might tell as many strange stories of them as I am rehearsing of my own. I am not sufficiently read in Puritanical antiquarianism to know whether the Independents once resembled the Presbyterians in the mode of conducting sacred music, and afterwards found it necessary, in the course of time, to institute distinct choirs, or whether they purposely instituted a custom diametrically opposite to that of their rival sectaries, after the fashion in which these last had themselves abolished surplices and organs. Neale is silent on these curious points. If one may judge from some merry traditions prevalent in New England, our good forefathers had no choirs, but sang under the dictation of one and sometimes two lines at a time from the minister or a clerk. Most of us have heard of singular divisions to which poor Sternhold and Hopkins were subjected by this custom. Thus,

> "The Lord will come, and he will not,
> Keep silence, but speak out,"

used to make perplexing sense to the pilgrims, when given out to them by a line at a time; for that such was the manner of uttering it, I have understood from a clergyman who learned it at a Massachusetts Convention dinner, twenty years ago, where the agreeable and orthodox Dr. —— set the table in a roar by relating the anecdote. It is probable, then, that experience and necessity in the lapse of time have forced upon our congregations

the present universal custom of assigning to a few individuals the task of leading the praises in public worship. It might now be dangerous, or rather impracticable, to introduce a reformation. If imperfections exist, perhaps they are a choice of the least. Yet still it were to be wished that the choir might not be regarded, so much as it is, as the sole medium through which this portion of worship is offered ; it were to be wished that our audiences would consider that body as leaders only, not performers—to be followed and accompanied, not to be listened to for luxurious gratification, or fastidious criticism, or as an eked-out variety of the tedious business of a Sunday. I can conceive that a choir, if properly instituted and administered, might be exceedingly useful in extending and preserving a true tone of taste, in keeping up a good selection of sacred music, and in acting, so to speak, as the teachers of the congregation, in these and kindred respects. But in the very duty thus prescribed them, lies their deplorable danger and temptation. They are unavoidably liable, as was above intimated, to resolve the matter into a mere profession. In the study of sacred music as a science, and the cultivation of it as an art, they forget its ultimate object. Nor could much else be expected from the narrowness of the human mind. Must it not be hard to attend to the thousand little circumstances which a skilful performance requires, and at the same time to keep the heart strained up to a pitch of true devotion ? And on the supposition that by practice and habit we can acquire a perfect familiarity with the pieces to

be performed, and a mutual confidence can be obtained among all the members of the choir; yet, alas! it is in the very process of cultivating this practice and habit, that the spirit of devotion is apt to evaporate, and to leave us admirable performers rather than cordial worshippers.

This state of things, moreover, has its temptations for the audience at large. The more beautiful the music, the greater is their inclination to listen and admire, rather than to bear a part. It seems a kind of sacrilege to let my indifferent voice break in upon the divine strains which are charming my ear. But the real sacrilege is in my refraining from the duty. Probably, about the most perfect and affecting sacred music in this country is that at the Andover Theological Seminary. Yet, who, in listening to the exquisite anthem sung at the anniversary of that institution, does not find himself unconsciously betrayed into an earthly ecstacy of weeping admiration, in which, on analysis, he is surprised and ashamed to find that real religion has but little, if any share?

Such always have been and always will be the dangers resulting from the conversion of taste and the arts into handmaids of religion. Perpetual efforts are requisite to keep them from becoming her mistresses at last. I appeal to the consciences of hundreds of congregations, who are in the habit of sitting, Sabbath after Sabbath, with Epicurean complacency, and silently listening to the music above them, as to a gratuitous and pleasant entertainment. I appeal with more confidence to the

consciences of a thousand choirs, who are engrossed in the anxious business of carrying a psalm off well, and are distracted with numerous likings and antipathies about different tunes, whether they do not commonly feel cut off, as by a kind of professional fence, from the devotional sympathies and sacred engagements of the congregation in general. Sharing no active or conspicuous part in the other services, but so very active and conspicuous a part in *one*, is it not the case, that they take little, if any interest in the former, and regard them rather in the light of a foil to set off their own paramount achievements, than as a votive wreath, into which it is their privilege, duty, and felicity, to weave a humble flower ?

Sorry I am to acknowledge that such were the predominant feelings in the choir at Waterfield, at that point of time in its history from which I have been led insensibly so far away by a dull train of digressive reflections. It is impossible to say how much of this defective sentiment may have been owing to the circumstance of our leader being a gay and rather inconsiderate young man, whom the whole of us were constrained to admire for his musical excellence and many parts of his private character. Certain it is, that Charles Williams had no other holier aspiration or thought at that time than to acquit himself with applause as the chief of a vocal company. In every other respect, his example would scarcely be recommended on the score of seriousness or piety. A little knot of whisperers was often gathered round him during

both the prayer and the delivery of the sermon, who began, perhaps, with discussing some points connected with the common business of the choir, but generally suffered the conversation to stray among still less appropriate and less excusable topics, until the occurrence of a jest or witticism from Charles betrayed them into something more than a smile, and reduced them to the necessity of separating from each other, in order to escape violating the more obvious decencies of the place.

Then again, it ought not to have been Charles Williams, of all persons, who scribbled with a lead pencil upon every blank leaf of every hymn-book and singing-book within his reach, filling them with grinning caricatures, with ridiculous mottoes, and with little messages to the adjoining pew, some of the occupants of which would blush, when they found themselves glancing with greater eagerness at these irregular and unseasonable *billets doux*, than listening to more edifying productions from the pulpit.

And adieu to the composure of that fair chorister, for one morning at least, to whom Charles Williams presented a bunch of dill, a pleasant little herb, resembling caraway, and common in the gardens of New England, the taste of whose aromatic seeds often serves in summer to beguile some forlorn moments that will occur to many attendants at the meeting-houses of this blessed land, as well as elsewhere. Not that a gallant attention of this kind from the hands of my youthful hero occasioned sufficient perturbation in the mind of the receiver

to drown her voice and prevent her from performing her part in the musical services. On the contrary, such an incident generally had the effect of inspiring her with more than usual animation, loudness, and expressiveness in her singing, the cause of which could be conjectured by none save such as happened to unite to an accidental observation a sagacious philosophy. No other obvious symptoms of agitation were allowed to escape her watchful self-possession, except perhaps neglecting to keep her snow-white pocket-handkerchief folded up as neatly as usual by the side of her hymn-book, and an inability to recollect the text when she was examined by her decrepit grandmother at home.

Nor were these favors on the part of our leader, in general, very discriminating or partial with respect to their objects. If Charles's bass-viol could have enjoyed a posy of dill, it would often, undoubtedly have been a successful rival of his more conscious and susceptible mistresses for such attentions. The time had not yet arrived, for the tenderest of all passions to become also the most overwhelming and absorbing in his soul. He had indeed too much constitutional sensibility not to find on his hands a succession of weekly or monthly idols of his imagination; but at the same time he had too much juvenile carelessness and too triumphant a presentiment of many exploits yet to be achieved by his genius for music, to allow any very deep and lasting impressions on his heart. Music, praise, and beauty, were to him equally intoxicating subjects of contemplation; he had not yet had enough of the first

two, to admit of his yielding himself entirely up to the influence of the last.

From the few sketches I have already given of the character of this young man, it will not excite surprise in my readers to learn that his parents, his friends, and himself entertained the wish of changing his present sphere and prospects in life. So much notice had been taken of him in various ways; his general capacity and activity were so conspicuous; and there was something about him so interesting, apart from his eminence as a young musical performer, that it seemed to be almost a defiance of Providence, to confine him to the obscure profession of a sedentary mechanic.

I use not the word *ignoble,* nor any other term of disparagement or contempt, as applicable to that vocation. I am too sturdy an American for that. Happily, in our country, we have scarcely a conception of what the epithet *ignoble* signifies, except in a purely moral point of view. The aristocratical pride of Europe accounts for this, by insisting, that we are all plebeians together, and of course that distinctions of rank among us are ridiculous. Our own pride, of which we have our full share, accounts for the circumstance on the opposite hypothesis, that we are a nation of highborn noblemen. But this is a poor dispute about names. The truth is, we are neither a nation of noblemen nor plebeians. How can such correlative terms be applied with any shadow of correctness, when the very political relations which they imply, do not exist? It is using a solecism to call Americans plebeians, because

to that class belongs the conscious degradation of witnessing above them, in the same body politic, an order of men born to certain privileges of which they are destitute by birth themselves. And for a similar reason, it is equally a solecism to regard ourselves, even metaphorically, as noblemen.

Why then did Charles Williams and his friends desire him to emerge from the calling in which his youth had been passed? Oh, we Americans have our *preferences*. We think it an innocent and a convenient thing to draw arbitrary lines of distinction between different professions; otherwise, the circle of one man's acquaintance would often be oppressively large. It is a pleasant employment, too, to clamber over these distinctions in life. Perhaps there is not a country in the world, where professions are so often changed as in America. We are restless and proud, and since our civil institutions have established no permanent artificial gradations among us, we have devised them ourselves. Yet still it is a matter which we act upon, rather than talk about. No American lady would dare to refuse her neighbour's invitation professedly on the score of the other being beneath her in society. Yet her refusal would be as prompt and decided as any lady's in England, towards an inferior in rank.

I do not wish to analyze too minutely the aristocratical leaven among us. I do not exactly understand its principle of operation myself. Pedigree it certainly is not, though that perhaps is one of its elements. Wealth and education have something to do with it. Different vocations in life, have

much more. Various degrees of softness and whiteness of the hands, are perhaps as good criterions as anything. Certain sets of persons do somehow contrive to obtain an ascendancy in every town and village. But in the present state of society, in our country, this whole subject is extremely unsettled. The mass is fermenting, and how the process will result eventually, time only can decide. Probably some future Court Calendar will rank among the first class of American citizens, all families descended in lines, more or less direct, from former presidents of the nation, heads of departments, governors of states, presidents of colleges, Supreme Court judges, commodores, and general officers. The second class may comprehend the posterity of members of congress, circuit and state judges, clergymen, presidents of banks, professors in colleges, captains of national vessels, leaders of choirs, and perhaps some others. I have no curiosity to speculate upon inferior classes, nor to determine any further the order in which far distant dinners shall be approached by eaters yet unborn, or future balls shall be arranged at Washington.

It is a difficult thing to say precisely, how much my hero was actuated by mere ambition in his wish to change his course of life. I do not think he despised his paternal employment. *He* had not much reason himself to complain of the proud man's contumely, in his own native village. But there were two strong reasons besides those before specified, which operated in his father's mind to determine him on the project of dismissing his son from

his present occupation. One was, that he was a very unprofitable apprentice. His passion for his favourite art encroached too largely on his time. A round of visits and frolics, to the temptation of which his musical and companionable qualities exposed him, absorbed the latter portion of many an afternoon in preparations of dress, and the former part of many a morning in sleeping away the effects of such expeditions. The other reason was, that it seemed to be cruel to confine the lad to an employment for which he had no inclination, and even no mechanical aptitude. There was little chance of his ever procuring a generous livelihood in that employment, and there were other professions more suited to his excursive and occasionally bookish disposition. These would have been sufficient reasons for his father to make the experiment of some other course of life for his son, more conformable to his taste and character, even if paternal vanity had not whispered into his ear, that his boy was born for very great things yet!

In New England, before the imposition of the embargo, and in times of peace, there were two ways of rising very high in the world. The one was, to become the clerk of some wholesale or retail merchant in Boston; and the other, to pass through a college. No aspiring lad throughout the country could think of any other avenue to distinction. Charles Williams was not a lover of money or of trade. He was among the very few youths of his native region, who arrive at the age of thirteen without bartering a pen-knife, or at that of nineteen without

cheating or being cheated in the exchange of watches. Accordingly, though he had a distant relative in Boston, who, while yet a minor, had gone four times every year to the market of that metropolis, with a cart full of such assorted commodities as were produced in his native town, and was now one of the wealthiest merchants on the Exchange, Charles obstinately shut his eyes to the prospect of entering this gentleman's counting-house. There was something in literary pursuits much more congenial to the taste and habits of his mind.

With all his follies and eccentricities, he had a warm friend and admirer in the Rev. Mr. Welby, who was for sending *every* young man of the most ordinary capacity to college, that had a soul sufficiently large even barely to meditate on such a purpose. Not that Mr. Welby's object, exactly, was to swell the list of liberally educated persons belonging to the place where he was settled, whenever he should communicate to the Massachusetts Historical Society, the topographical and antiquarian account of the town of Waterfield. The propensity in question, rather seemed to be with him a kind of weakness, and one, too, with which many of his profession in New England are afflicted. Owing their own importance in life, and their peculiar opportunities for usefulness, to their collegiate education, they have no idea that any greater blessings under the skies can be conferred on an unmarried man of whatever talents, and at whatever age, than that of causing him to leave the plough or the workshop, and after a struggle of seven years

between the Latin dictionary and despair, to obtain a degree. It is not surprising, therefore, that the warm-hearted Mr. Welby should offer to become Charles' gratuitous instructor, in preparing him for college ;—an offer which was gratefully accepted.

Although our hero was far from being so apt a scholar in the niceties of the Greek and Latin tongues, as we have already seen him in the science of music, yet the novelty and dignity of the pursuits which he had now adopted, the definite object proposed for him to accomplish, and the shame of abandoning his aim in defeat, unitedly prompted him to undergo one or two years of pretty severe application to study. During this time, he was still a leader of the village choir, though I cannot say that the partial change in his private life and habits, operated in correcting many of those reprehensible characteristics, which I have before lamented as derogatory to our singing-pew. And although we had been long taught to anticipate his departure, yet words can scarcely represent the sorrow and dismay with which we bade him farewell on the Sabbath before his setting off for Dartmouth College.

On the next morning at daybreak, a few of us were at his father's threshold to shake hands with him once more. He had already breakfasted, and had mounted the horse which was purchased for the occasion, to be disposed of again on the best terms possible, when he should have entered college. A huge pair of saddlebags, the heir-loom of his family for several generations, hung across

the horse behind, and contained some changes of wearing apparel, together with his books, and various articles of pastry for the road, which he owed to the care of his sisters, and some of their female friends. He had already repeated his salutations to his moist-eyed family and acquaintances, and was holding the reins in his left hand ready to start, when, at a signal from him, I reached him his bass-viol, inclosed in a large leathern case made by his good father for the purpose. He received it in his trembling right hand with a look, gleaming through his agitated countenance, which seemed to say, I leave not *every* friend behind,—and spurred off his horse up the margin of the river.

'And who was the next leader of the choir?' is a question, which, (may I humbly hope?) these memoirs have excited sufficient interest in my susceptible readers to propose. With great diffidence I am persuaded to answer that it was their humble servant. Who or what I am, separately from my once having discharged the honourable function just mentioned, it is of no sort of consequence to know, and it is clear from my anonymous title-page, that I do not think the knowledge would contribute to the eclat of my humble production. If any lines in the following portrait of myself appear to be favourably drawn, let not vanity be ascribed to the act, while I seek to hide the original, and even his very name, from the public gaze.

Previously to the departure of my friend Charles Williams, I had acted as player of clarionet to the choir; not, I fear, always with the greatest repu-

tation; for I scarcely remember a Sunday of my performance, when my instrument did not at least once through the day betray itself into a hideous squeak, as involuntarily on my part as if there had been a little evil spirit within the tube, sent there to tempt and torment me. At these agonizing moments, I would cast one glance at the countenance of Charles Williams, and finding that there was in that image of native civility no mark of fretful reprehension, or of tittering infirmity, I proceeded in my part;—nor do I know how I discovered that my fellow-singers were not quite so composed as their leader, unless it were, that while from alarm and mortification, my face was reddening, and my perspiration flowing, my eyes were enlarged from the same cause, and thus extended the sphere of their lateral vision. But I am no optician, and hazard nothing on this point beyond conjecture. I believe it was instinct that prevented me, on such occasions, from seeing so far as into the adjoining pew. There was one face there, on which, if I had ever seen a smile approaching to derision, I know that it would have broken my heart.

But if I do not deceive myself, the squeak in my clarionet was the only ridiculous thing about me, and was probably but the more amusing from its striking contrast to the general gravity of my deportment. On laying aside, therefore, this instrument of my little disgraces, which was a necessary step towards my leading the choir with effect and energy, I trust I had no enormous disqualifications for the office. The authority of Charles had been

sustained solely by his transcendant musical talents; mine, I felt, was to be preserved by the most exemplary demeanour, and an assiduous attention to my duty. I could only boast of a mediocrity in musical knowledge and vocal execution. If I was far below my predecessor in accomplishments requisite for the office, I at least avoided the mistakes into which Mr. Harrington had been often plunged. Until a calamitous concurrence of circumstances, soon to be rehearsed, not an individual, I think, left the choir during my administration, with the exception of those, whom death or removal out of town subtracted from our number. I loved the office, for it gave me a little importance, and I was, at that time, of no great account in the parish in other respects. Besides, I was extremely attached to public worship, and to all its hallowed decencies; thinking it an honour to exercise the superintendence over so important a department as that assigned to me. With regard to punctuality at meeting (for so we call *church* in New England) the minister himself never outstripped me in that particular. He has more than once, on a stormy day, without commencing service, dismissed my single self, together with one other parishioner, who appeared at meeting only in such weather, and came then, as he whimsically alleged, *to fill up*; and often, on some of our terribly cold Sundays, when seven or eight worshippers in leggins would well nigh drown the preacher's voice with the prodigious knocking and stamping of their feet, I was found alone at my post in the singing-gallery, suffering in perfect

silence the agony of my frost-bitten extremities, and permitting my attention to be no farther diverted from Mr. Welby, than now and then in watching the dense volumes of congealed vapor, which were breathed out from a few scattered pews in the almost vacant edifice.

So far as I can impartially judge, I was one of the most peaceable and unpretending of men. I gave out always, without the least hesitation, whatever tune was suggested to me by any individual in the choir, sacrificing with pleasure my own little preferences, and what is more, the pride of authority, to the gratification of others. Perhaps the general manners of the choir at church were improved during my precentorship. Let me with modesty say, and with deference to the shade of my dear friend Charles, who is now no more, that my own example probably contributed to some slight amendment in our body after his departure. I had long since formed a secret resolution in my breast, that no old man in the congregation should be more attentive to the services than myself, and I carried it into effect. This naturally influenced a few of my immediate companions to adopt a similar deportment ; and the good order of the rest of the choir suffered at least only a negative violation from the sleep of some, and the studies of others, who preferred looking over the tunes of the Village Harmony, or reading the everlasting Elegy on Sophronia, or amusing themselves with the inscriptions of their late leader, to receiving the benefits which might have been derived from Mr. Welby's excellent sermons.

After a year had glided away very nearly in this manner, some sensation was produced in the choir and congregation, and, ultimately, some disturbance occasioned to my own peace and happiness, by the addition of a gentleman to our number, who, on several accounts, had no small pretensions. He was the preceptor of an academy, situated, if I recollect aright, not more than ten miles from the town of Waterfield. He was paying his addresses to a young lady of this last-mentioned place, and therefore seized on the opportunities which a remission of his duties every Saturday afternoon allowed him, to visit the object of his affections. The Sabbath, of course, was spent by him in our village, and as he was a professed admirer and performer of sacred music, and was a gentleman of liberal education, genteel though forward manners, and a superior style of dress for a country town, he was soon introduced into the singing-pew, and without the least difficulty found a seat at my left hand. Being blest with a happy degree of modest assurance, it did not require a second invitation for him to assume habitually the same place afterwards as a matter of course.

On the very first Sabbath that he joined us, he startled me a little by requesting that *Old Hundred* might be sung to a psalm which the minister had just begun to read. I told him that I should be very glad to oblige him by announcing that tune to the choir, but the truth was, it had not been performed in our meeting-house probably for thirty years ;—that there were but four or five singers

who were acquainted with it, being such only as had chanced to hear it sung at home by their fathers or grandfathers; and that those few had only practised it once or twice together and in private, from mere curiosity to ascertain how so celebrated a piece of musical antiquity would sound.

'Oh, if there are four or five,' replied Mr. Forehead, (the name of my lofty new acquaintance,) 'who know anything of Old Hundred, by all means let us have it. I beg it, Sir, as a particular favor, and will give you my reasons for the request after service.'

My prevailing disposition to oblige, and the great quantity of time already consumed in our conversation, imposed upon me now the necessity of pronouncing aloud, as was usual just before beginning to sing, the name of this venerable air. No sooner had the word proceeded from my mouth, than there appeared to be a motion of keen curiosity among the congregation below, but in the choir around me there reigned the stillness of incredulity and surprise. All the elder members of the flock, I could observe, looked upwards to the gallery, with the gleams of pleasurable expectation in their countenances. Of our well-filled orchestra, only eight individuals arose, for there were no more among us who possessed the least acquaintance with Old Hundred. And even three out of that number were as ignorant of it as those who continued seated, but ventured to expose themselves, trusting to the assistance they might derive from the voices of the other performers, and from the score of the tune itself, contained

in some, though I think not in all the copies of the Village Harmony which were present.

The psalm was sung with tolerable correctness; but accompanied with *such* a fanning on the part of the females, who were all sitting, and *such* a whispering among those of the correlative sex who were unemployed, that I could bode nothing but disturbance and unhappiness for a long time to come in our choral circle.

During the reading of the next psalm, while Mr. Forehead was alarming me with a recommendation to sing St. Martin's, four stout acquaintances of my own pressed forward and whispered with an earnestness that carried the sound over every part of the edifice, 'Sing New Jerusalem!' New Jerusalem therefore I appointed to be sung, and thus prevented, as I make no sort of question, more than three quarters of the singers from leaving their seats vacant in the afternoon.

At the close of the morning service, I had the promised interview and explanation with my new acquaintance. It seems that since leaving college he had been reading law for a year in an office at one of our seaport towns, and while there, had occasionally assisted in the choir of some congregation, into which had been introduced a new and purer taste for sacred music than generally prevailed through the rest of the country. In that choir, as he informed me, no tunes of American origin were ever permitted to gain entrance. Fugues there were a loathing and detestation. None but the slow, grand, and simple airs which our forefathers

sang, found any indulgence. Mr. Forehead assured me that no other music was worth hearing, and what seemed to weigh particularly with him was the circumstance, that the slow music in question was beginning to be all the fashion. It was under the operation of these ideas that he had been so strenuous in forcing upon our choir the performance of Old Hundred and St. Martin's, in defiance of our helpless ignorance of both of them.

It appeared to me that his zeal on this point was carrying him too far; I saw in his aims quite as strong workings of a conscious superiority in taste, and of the fastidious arrogance of fashion, as a love for genuine and appropriate music. I could not but question, too, the propriety of suddenly and violently forcing upon a choir and congregation a species of music to which they were entirely unaccustomed. It occurred to me, besides, that though the most slow and solemn tunes might be executed with good effect when sustained by the accompaniment of an organ, yet it was scarcely judicious to confine the whole music of a *vocal* choir entirely or even principally to that kind alone. But all these suggestions were of no avail in convincing my opponent, and we parted with not the kindest opinions and feelings respecting each other.

In the course of a month, Mr. Forehead's argument, persuasion, and example, wrought in a large portion of the choir a very considerable change of taste on this subject. There were some, who loved novelty; there were others, who yielded to the stranger's assurances respecting the fashionableness

of the thing; and there was a third description, who were really convinced of the better adaptation of the ancient tunes to the purposes of worship, and had a taste to enjoy their solemn and beautiful strains. All these classes composed perhaps about a moiety of the choir, and were eager for the introduction of the good old music. The other half were extremely obstinate and almost bigoted in their opposition to this measure, and in their attachment to the existing catalogue of tunes. Disputes now ran high amongst us. Most of us took sides on the question with an inexcusable warmth, and without any attempt at compromise.

I know of nothing more unconquerable and spiteful than the bickerings of a divided choir while they last. In addition to all the ordinary exacerbations of party spirit there is a most unpardonable offence committed by each side in suspecting the good taste of the other. Thus vanity is wounded to its deepest core, and conscience and conviction are fretted into a fierce perseverance, which is not at all diminished by the circumstance, that the parties must sit, act, and sing in the closest contact, and almost breathe into each other's faces.

In the midst of this unhappy musical commotion, there was one individual, who had the good fortune to remain thus far entirely neuter. It was, reader, the humble historian of these transactions,—the afflicted leader of that agitated band. I had long wished, together with my friend Charles Williams, that a better style of music might prevail among us. But we both felt that we had neither skill

nor authority to effect the exchange. If the tares should be torn up, we knew that the wheat would be liable to come with them. My private opinion, as well as general disposition, led me therefore, to be as quiescent as possible amid the difficulties now existing. I did not, as I believe, escape all censure from either party, but I received no bitter treatment from any one. Due deference and acknowledgment still continued for some time to be paid me as leader, except perhaps from the pragmatical stranger. But no efforts or prudence on my part could prevent the explosion which was ultimately to ensue.

When it was found that Mr. Forehead had sufficient influence to introduce a few of his favorite tunes on the settled and customary catalogue, and that the matter had proceeded to something more than a simple experiment, the admirers of fugues looked upon themselves as a beaten party, and took occasion, when two of the obnoxious airs had happened to be given out by me on one Sunday morning, to absent themselves altogether from worship in the afternoon. My feelings in this predicament are not to be described. I regarded myself as a principal cause of this deplorable feud, and lamented that I had not had sufficient strength of mind to resist the encroachments of the active gentleman at my left hand. But the standard was now raised and war was declared. I felt that it would be ignominious to quit my post. I gave up for a time my arguments with Mr. Forehead on the propriety of singing slow tunes altogether. No attempts were

made to effect a reconciliation and return of the absenting party. It was resolved among those who remained behind, to perform no other music than such as we deemed the most genuine, and an express was sent off by the first opportunity to purchase thirty copies of the lately published ******* Collection.

In the mean time, however, the controversy had descended to the congregation. As long as the choir had kept together on terms of seeming decency, it was hardly to be expected that the audience at large would take part in our little animosities. The parish would never have undertaken to control a whole choir, if that choir would have united in any species of music, however contrary to the tastes and habits of those who bore no share in its performance. But when it was found that our little vocal commonwealth had been rent asunder, and that so large a division of malcontents had retired in indignation to a Sacred Mount, the sympathies of brothers, sisters, parents, and friends, were at once excited, and musical predilections were enlisted along with the ties of nature to swell the threatening dissatisfaction. For several Sundays I remained firm, supported as I was by all the ostentatious influence and patronage of Mr. Forehead, and the zealous co-operation of his partisans. We persisted every Sabbath in singing these four tunes—Old Hundred, St. Martin's, Bath, and Little Marlborough, unless the minister varied his metres from that standard, and even then we were prepared with tunes of a similar class.

By these means we hoped to awaken a better taste among those of the congregation who were averse to our new style, and eventually to recall a majority of the dissidents, who we trusted would become convinced of the excellence of our improvements, and gradually return to partake of the honor and pleasure attached to them.

But our expectations were disappointed. Our triumph had a date of only about three months, and was even waning while it lasted. We could not force the likings of a prejudiced, and in some respects, exasperated congregation. The singing in the meeting-house was the constant topic of every private conversation. All possible ridicule and contempt were thrown out against each of the respective styles in question. All sorts of arguments were used, that reason, or passion, or prejudice, could devise. Till at length, I verily believe, our inclinations became so perverted by the mere operation of party feeling, that many of us hated and despised the venerable air of Old Hundred with as much heartiness as they did the toad that crossed their path at twilight, while others regarded the generally very innocent tune of Northfield with the same abhorrence that we bestowed on a snake. Unfortunately for the better side of the argument at this time, the attachment to a rapid, fuguing, animated style of singing was too deeply and extensively seated in the affections of the people of Waterfield, to be eradicated by the impotent perseverance of our diminished choir. Pew after pew became deserted, until we found that we were

singing, and Mr. Welby preaching to almost naked walls. The hoary head was still there, for it loved to listen to the strains which had nourished the piety of its youth. A few families of fashionable pretensions encouraged us, for there was something aristocratical in the superior taste of our newly introduced music, and something modish in its reputation. Nothing but the strongest religious feelings induced a few other scattered individuals to appear at meeting, and it was but too evident that full three quarters of the usual attendants remained at home.

This spectacle produced the deepest effect on my mind. I had a sufficient sense of the blessings of public worship to feel and know, that they must not be sacrificed to a mere point of musical taste. I was therefore perfectly willing to resign all my biases for the sake of seeing our beloved meeting-house again filled with its motley throngs, and of feeling the delicious, though perhaps imaginary coolness excited by the agitations of several hundred fans, those busy little agents; so lively, so glancing, yet so silent,—and of hearing the full thunder of all the seats as they were slammed down after prayer, though Mr. Welby had frequently remonstrated with earnestness against it,—but much to my satisfaction, remonstrated in vain, for I scarcely know any sound more grateful to my ear than this. Whether it is, that it is connected with the idea of a full congregation, which I always loved, or with the close of the prayer, which in early youth I thought insufferably long, or whether it was

originally a most agreeable diversification of the inaction and monotony of church hours, I cannot tell, but something has wonderfully attached me to the noise of a thousand falling seats. And this attachment you will find very general in New England. Many a minister there will tell you that his attempts to correct the supposed evil have always been ineffectual; and if you are riding through the land on a summer Sabbath, you may observe that long before you are in sight of the meeting-house, your starting horse and saluted ear will give decided testimony to the clergyman's complaint, while all the wakened echoes round will inform you that if you spur forward for a half mile or more, you will be in season to hear a good portion of the sermon, though you have lost the prayer.

I was unable any longer to endure the destitute appearance of the meeting-house, and having consulted with Mr. Welby, who advised me to make whatever sacrifices I could for the restoration of peace, I caused it to be circulated one day in the village, that on the following Sabbath I should return to the kind of music which had lately been abandoned. The necessity for this measure was the more pressing, as I heard it murmured that a town-meeting was soon to be called for the purpose of securing a mode of singing, which should be agreeable to a great majority of the parish.

My present associates and supporters, indeed, almost to a man, took umbrage at my determination; and were not seen in public when the Sabbath came.

But I was surrounded by all the choristers of the other party, and the meeting-house was crowded, and the downfalling seats re-echoed again to my delighted ear.

And now for several weeks was the full-breathing triumph of the lovers of crotchets and quavers over the votaries of minims and semibreves. The latter faction sullenly absented themselves from the singing pew, and generally from worship, while the former revelled amid the labyrinths of fugues, believing to their own happiness, certainly, the order of consecutive parts to be the sweetest of melodies, and the recurrence of consecutive fifths the most delightful of harmonies. In place of the lists of ancient tunes above enumerated, were now substituted Russia, Northfield, The Forty-sixth Psalm, New Jerusalem, and others of the same mint. The name of Billings was a sufficient passport of recommendation to any air that was mentioned, while that of Williams or of Tansur, was sure to condemn it to neglect. We were encouraged by the looks and voices of all those members of the congregation who were beneath fifty years of age, or if any such declined to accompany us either with a hum or an articulated modulation, they perhaps testified their satisfaction by the visible beating of a hand, whose arm lay along the top of a pew.

But this was to me only a silver age, compared with the golden reign of Charles Williams. I felt that my taste had become much confirmed and purified by my recent study and practice of a better style of church music, and I could therefore the

less easily tolerate that which I was compelled now to support. By far the better half of the choir, also, in point of musical skill and execution, refrained from renewing their services, and I was distressed to know what methods I could adopt to allure them back. Even my rival and annoyer, Mr. Forehead, I should have been glad to welcome again at my left hand. His voice had both power and sweetness, and perhaps the only defect in his mode of performing, was his perpetual attempt at ornament and trilling, a defect still further enhanced by the circumstance, that instead of trilling with his tongue, he always attempted that accomplishment with his lips alone, being the veritable original, by whom the well known unhappy change was made upon the word *bow* in the following distich:

'With reverence let the saints appear,
And bow before the Lord.'

Nevertheless, I was perfectly willing and desirous to enter into a negotiation with him and his party, for the purpose of procuring, if possible, some mutual compromise and reconciliation, and filling up again the complement of the choir.

Bat this was an attempt of no little delicacy and difficulty. The exasperation of both parties was too recent and too sore, immediately to admit of an amicable personal union, or to allow the expectation that either side would endure the favourite music of the other. Time, however, which effects such mighty revolutions in the affairs of empires, condescends also to work the most important

changes in the aspect of humble villages, and still humbler choirs.

It is the office of this unpretending narrative, to record the mutations to which one of the last-mentioned communities is exposed in New England. Whether the train of incidents here exhibited be a specimen of what occurs to many other choirs within the same region, my experience does not enable me to decide. Many of my readers, however, will probably recognise in these memoirs of a single collection of singers, several features common to all others.

I have often thought that such communities are a kind of arena for the exhibition of some peculiar and specific human infirmities. Every new combination of our social nature, indeed, seems to produce some new results, in the same manner as each species of vegetables nourishes its peculiar tribe of animalcules. I take it that our national congress elicits from its component members certain specific virtues and vices, and certain modifications of feeling, passion, and talent, denied to us mere readers of newspapers at home. Where but on the floor of the American capitol, would the peculiarities of a certain member's sarcasm, and of another member's sublime statesmanship be generated and developed? So in a church choir, there somehow arise certain shades of freaks, certain starts of passion, certain species of whim, certain modes of folly, and let me humbly suggest, also, certain descriptions of virtue, to be found exactly in no other specimens throughout the moral kingdom of man.

May I fondly hope that these desultory delineations, intermingled though they are with intrusive speculations, and superficial efforts at philosophizing, may at least prove corrective of kindred defects, if such anywhere exist, with those which are here exposed? A mirror sometimes shocks the child out of a passion, of whose deformity he could not be convinced except by its disgusting effects on his own face. And if the perusal of these pages, which have been too carelessly thrown together, in order to indulge some juvenile recollections, and to soothe some painful heavy hours, be instrumental in correcting any imperfections to which our church choirs are liable, I shall feel more than repaid for my anxiety in undertaking the perilous enterprise of authorship. But let us be moving forward.

In a very few months, negociations were entered into with the body of the other party, of whom some half dozen individuals of the least zealous had from time to time returned, and given in their adhesion to the ruling powers. The truth was, that on our part, we felt extremely the want of instrumental music, and of a few excellent voices in the treble. After Charles Williams had left us, a tolerable bass-viol was played by an elderly storekeeper, a bachelor, who had formerly assisted the choir several years with that instrument, but had resigned it as soon as Charles became prepared to supply his place. This gentleman, with his clerk, who played a fine flute, had participated in the dudgeon of the lovers of ancient melody. But nearly all of them now wished to return, conscious,

undoubtedly, of the improvement which it was truly in their power to contribute to our performances, and unwilling that their talents should any longer be hidden in a napkin.

The terms of reconciliation and re-union were settled in the following manner. As our performances were required regularly five times on a sabbath, it was agreed that the arrangement of tunes throughout the day should be two fugues, two of the slow ancient airs, and one of a different description from either. Neither party could well object to airs of a rapid and animated movement, in which all the parts continued uninterruptedly to the close, as in the case with Wells, Windham, Virginia, and many others. Another class of tunes also were very general favourites, though they avoided both extremes that were the bones of contention among us. I allude to those in which the third line is a duet between the bass and treble, of which St. Sebastian's is a well-known and beautiful instance.

For some time we proceeded together in this new arrangement with as little interruption as could be well expected from existing circumstances. A very few of the most obstinate and paltry-minded, of each side, held out indeed for longer or shorter periods, and one or two perhaps never returned till a grand revolution of the whole corps, to be described hereafter, should our history ever reach a second part. For several Sundays, also, four or five Guelphs would contemptuously sit in perfect silence during the singing of the Ghibeline tunes;

and as many Ghibelines would return the compliment during the singing of the Guelph tunes. And even when they were compelled to abandon such indecent deportment by the censures to which it exposed them, to my certain knowledge they were silent while standing up with the choir, or moved their lips in a whisper, or sang so very low, as to give no sort of assistance to the rest.

However, these little factious symptoms gradually disappeared, and I had at length the happiness of finding myself at the head of my musical flock, with the embers of former grievances well nigh asleep, and with a decided advantage gained in our taste and selection of tunes. But what struggles and dangers had been incurred, in order to arrive at this improved condition! I can resort to no illustration of these events more apt than the kingdom of France, which, as some imagine, derives a faint compensation for the horrors of the revolution, from the amendments effected in some of its circumstances and institutions, and which neither despotism nor superstition can in future hope to wipe away.

Yet, amid these various concussions, it will not be surprising that my own authority should have been completely undermined. It is scarcely supposable that I could be a very decided favourite with either of the parties who had frowned so awfully upon each other, since I had in a manner sided with both of them. Although, therefore, I was most scrupulously impartial in selecting such descriptions of tunes as exactly conformed to the terms of the treaty, yet there was not a member of the

choir, whose friendship was sufficiently zealous to join me in resisting the new encroachments of Mr. Forehead. While that gentleman confined himself to a general selection equally impartial with mine, not a spectator thought of murmuring, when he suggested, as he constantly did, this and that particular tune for any given psalm or hymn, and suggested it too, with such an air of certainty and confidence, that I was not the man to hold up my head, and say at a single glance, 'Sir, I am on my own ground here.' When he found that his suggestions were in this way constantly adopted, it was an easy and natural transition for him next to whisper round of his own accord, to the few who sat near him, the name of the tune to be sung, and to whisper it also to me with the same nonchalance, that I might proclaim it to the choir as usual. And then, with as much ease and as calm a face as Napoleon wore when he stept from the consular chair to the imperial throne, it only remained for him to assume the precentorship at once, by uttering aloud one Sunday, to my amazement, the name of the first tune in the morning, and continuing the practice from that moment until his departure from the choir and the neighbourhood.

Thus my own occupation was gone. On the afternoon of the morning just mentioned, I entered the singing pew and took my seat at some distance from the post of honor, which I felt to be no longer mine. It was of no use to appeal to the members of the choir in my defence. I had suffered encroachment after encroachment to be gradually

made upon my authority, until the last act of usurpation was scarcely perceptible. I knew that I should have no enthusiastic supporters of my rights. I had not one personal qualification by which to balance the imposing and overbearing accomplishments of my competitor. I dare say all the choir and all the congregation thought him the best leader, as I confess, on the whole, he was. Probably the precise circumstances under which the exchange was made, were not discerned by many among them. Perhaps they might have supposed that my resignation and transfer of the pitch-pipe were voluntary. Indeed I half hope they did suppose so. But no; I am willing they should have known the whole truth. But let the matter rest. It is an era in my biography which I do not love to contemplate.

I am not ashamed, however, that I continued in the choir. I am certain it was not meanness which kept me there, though some at first sight may so interpret it: it was a struggle between pride and duty, in which duty won the victory; and though pride had indignation for its ally, yet my devoted and disinterested love for those singing seats, came up to the assistance of duty, and decided the contest.

Besides, why should I desert those seats? Should I have felt happier, could I have concealed my mortification better, by sitting with the family below? By no means. I might as well remain where I was, and bury my feelings in the flood of sound with which my own tremulous voice was mingled.

For I considered, that it was always my peculiar lot, wherever I was, and whatever I did, to have some mortification or other on my hands, or, I would say, on my heart. The squeak of my clarionet was but an epitome of a certain note that has occasionally grated the whole tenor of my fortune and life. I had a disaffected mother-in-law; my schoolmaster was partial to my rival; I was bound an apprentice to an uncongenial employment, which I could not abandon until I was free; I was once jilted; how I was superseded in the choir has been seen above: I always try to do my best, but am liable to overdo. I have been disinterested and generous to my friends, till I have spoiled them, and they have sometimes become my foes from expecting more than I could or ought to perform. The same out-of-the-way note, I acknowledge, attaches itself to most of my compositions. I have written some things in these very pages of a kin with that portentous strain of my instrument; but I could not help it; and I expect, that with some praises that may be vouchsafed to this production, other things will be said of it that will cut me to the very heart. But I will try to be prepared for them.

And now, reader, you may in some measure understand how I could endure to haunt, like a ghost, the scene of my former triumphs. Remember, however, that I met no scorn on the occasion. Not a soul was there, who would not have regretted my absence. A gentle and quiet exchange of leaders had been effected, and there the matter rested in every mind. The most direct way by which I

could have caused it to redound to my ill-reputation and discomfort, would have been, to make a stir about it. Prudence, therefore, if nothing else, might whisper me the proper course to be pursued.

Thus a fifth leader of the choir at Waterfield is duly and regularly recorded on these veracious annals. His reign, like that of his predecessor, was stormy and unfortunate. For some weeks, Mr. Forehead adhered inviolably to the articles of union touching the selection of particular kinds of music. But it is the natural tendency of usurped power, when thus easily acquired, to produce security, audacity, encroachment, downfal. The precentor's partialities at length began to burst out, and occasional small violations of the treaty were hazarded with impunity. But when he attempted to advance further, and one whole Sunday passed without the permission of a single fugue to wake up the indifferent congregation, an alarm was taken by the lovers of that species of melody. A repetition of former disturbances and irritations was threatened. Some of the choir took no part in the performance; some absolutely left the seats for neighbouring pews, and a convulsion was on the eve of again breaking us in pieces.

The amiable Mr. Welby perceived the indications of an approaching storm. He devoted himself, therefore, the ensuing week to the preparation of a discourse, which he hoped might check the evil in its commencement. Meanwhile, however, the difficulty was provided for in another way. A deputation had called on the encroaching leader that very evening,

and, making the strongest representations of the dissatisfaction which would certainly prevail, if he should continue the course of administration to which he was inclined, extorted from him a promise that he would immediately return to the recent arrangement which had so well secured the harmony of the choir, and the complacency of the congregation.

But Mr. Welby knew nothing of the happy turn that affairs had thus assumed, and the members of the choir, on their part, knew nothing of the benevolent officiousness that was prompting the labors of his study. Even had he been aware that a reconciliation had taken place, it is probable that he would still have interwoven into his next discourse some gentle persuasives to mutual kindness. His utter ignorance, however, of that happy occurrence, caused his sermon in some places to wear an aspect of unnecessary pointedness and severity. Although it contained but one explicit allusion to the choir, yet it unfortunately was calculated with exquisite skill to meet precisely such a state of excitement as there was every reason to suppose the singers would by this time be wrought up to. But what was meant for exhortation, was now felt as reproach; the more tender and soothing the preacher's language, the more it seemed like oil descending on the flames. The whole choir had come together that morning in a state of jealous irritability; they were ready to break out somewhere; the terms of the last Sunday evening's engagement guarded them from waging battle with each other; the one party were moody and disappointed, the other felt injured and

suspicious; 'and now, to be held up to the congregation—to be found fault with by the minister—to be chidden just at the moment when they were all endeavoring to keep peace together!' Such were the exaggerated and unjust reflections excited in their minds by one of the mildest and most beautiful discourses on brotherly love that was ever composed, and in which, as I before observed, only one direct allusion was made to them, wherein the preacher expressed his trust, that those who gladdened the house of God with the harmony of their voices, would be particularly careful to cultivate the much sweeter, and to the ear of Heaven, the much more acceptable harmony, that resulted from a union of pious hearts.

But no matter, it gave to those prejudiced and capricious choristers an object on which to exercise their characteristic waywardness, and an opportunity to make themselves of some troublesome importance. Accordingly, to wreak a glorious revenge on the interfering parson, and to impress on the whole world a sense of their immeasurable consequence, not a soul of them on the afternoon of that day appeared in the singing seats—with the exception, let me humbly add, of *one*, as unworthy indeed as the rest, but who would never for such a provocation, have deserted that gallery until the imitation-marble columns that supported it were crumbling into ruins. Whatever others might have thought of me, however poor-spirited and grandmother-loving I may have appeared, yet if there have been any moments in my life of loftier triumph, but at

the same time, of more piteous melancholy than others, they assuredly occurred during the quarter of an hour, when I sat perfectly alone in that deserted singing pew, fixing my eye and face on no other object than my afflicted minister, who was waiting in trembling dismay for the entrance of the rest of the choir.

Never shall I forget the moment when the dreadful truth flashed into his mind, and he perceived, by their protracted absence, the mistake that he must have committed in the morning. Yet it was but an instant of agony, and was succeeded by a high-souled though involuntary look of calmness, and consciousness that he had discharged no more than a well-meant religious and professional duty. The tears were soon wiped away from his face, a decent composure was assumed, a hymn was quickly selected, which Watts, the sweet psalmist of the modern Israel, could furnish him most appropriately for the occasion, and was then announced and read with a tremulousness of voice, that indicated rather a successful effort for firmness, than any yielding weakness of heart.

I had the honour, on that occasion, of setting and leading a tune, which was accompanied by Mr. Welby's modest, though perfect and full-toned bass. We were the only singers for the remainder of that day. The hearts of some among the worshippers were too full, and of others too anxious, to lend us a helping note. From that moment, the closest friendship was formed and cemented between Mr. Welby and myself, and it was but lately that I paid

him the last dollar of the money which he liberally advanced to defray more than half the expenses of my college education.

I was ' monarch of all I surveyed ' in that singing pew for four months. Mr. Welby of course had no apology to make. Apology indeed! He was in truth the only injured party. Had the whole choir entered the meeting-house on their knees, singing *Peccavimus* and *Miserere*, they would, by such humiliation, have scarcely effaced their violation of sacred proprieties and of the feelings of their pastor. Should Mr. Welby's Journal of his Ministry, which I know he has copiously recorded, be ever given to the world, I have not a doubt that this transaction will be stated there with ample justice and candour, and make no insignificant appearance among the various trials which a New England clergyman is called upon to endure.

It was long ere a sense of lingering compunction, together with various other feelings and circumstances, brought the wanderers back to their deserted fold. Meanwhile I continued the discharge of my solitary duty in the gallery, and most minutely scrupulous was I, in selecting the tunes according to the arrangement prescribed amidst the recent troubles. I was determined to give to no person whatever the slightest cause of offence, but to hold out every encouragement for all who chose to return. Mr. Welby and myself derived occasional assistance from a few voices below, but often the whole musical duties of worship developed upon us alone. Few indeed of the members of the late choir carried their

animosity so far as to renounce attendance at church altogether. Mr. Forehead, I think, was never seen in that meeting-house but once again. Soon after his abrupt retirement from the seats, he married and left the neighbourhood, carrying off with him one of the best treble voices in the village.

At the beginning of the following winter, I was compelled to fulfil an engagement I had entered into, to keep a district-school for three months in the county of Rockingham, New Hampshire. Soon after I had taken my departure for this purpose, Mr. Welby was seized with a troublesome affection of his lungs, which scarcely permitted him to perform even his strictly pastoral services. And now the musical tide in my native congregation was at its very lowest ebb. For two or three Sundays the minister did not even presume to read a psalm, certain that no one present would rise and sing it. Can my readers imagine from what quarter relief was derived in this gloomy state of things? From none other than a few of the very oldest members of the congregation. Four ancient men, the least of whose ages was seventy-three, indignant at the folly and pertinacity of those singers of yesterday, and wearied out with waiting for a return of tolerable music, tottered up the stairs one Sabbath morning with the assistance of the panelled railing, and took their places in the seats left vacant by their degenerate grandsons. Two of them had fought in the old French war, and all had taken a civil or military part, more or less conspicuous, in the struggle for our country's independence. One

indeed, bore a title of considerable military rank. His hair was as white as the falling snow; the other three displayed white or gray wigs, with a large circular bush, mantling over the upper part of the back, like a swelling cloud round the shoulders of old Wachusett. Their voices of course were broken and tremulous, but not destitute of a certain grave and venerable sweetness. They kept the most perfect time, as they stood in a row, fronting the minister, with their hands each holding a lower corner of their books, which they waved from side to side in a manner the most solemn and imposing. Their very pronunciation had in it something primitive and awe-inspiring. Their *shall* broadened into *shawl*, *do* was exchanged for *doe*, and *earth* for *airth*. Their selection of tunes was of the most ancient composition and slowest movement, with the exception, occasionally, of old Sherborne, and the Thirty-fourth Psalm.

How vividly do I remember the spectacle which they presented to my revering eyes, when I attended the meeting house late one morning, after having walked on snow-shoes the last five miles of the distance from the place where I was employed in teaching, to pay a short visit to my friends. On entering the beloved edifice whose white, though bell-less steeple I had for some time gazed on from afar with emotions almost as strong as if I had been absent several years, it was my purpose to ascend immediately to my usual station. But before I had passed the door, unexpected and unaccustomed sounds for that place burst upon my ears, and my

curiosity irresistibly led me forward to my father's pew near the pulpit, that I might have a full view of the strange choir which had so magically sprung up during my short absence, and that I might not disturb it by my unnecessary intrusion.

This was not the first nor the last time that I have witnessed extraordinary energy of character, as occasions called for it, displayed by octogenarians of New England. Few of my readers, perhaps, will fail to remember instances analogous to that here recorded. Those apparently decrepit forms, which you see at frame-raisings, confined to the easy task of fashioning the pins, and telling stories of the revolution; or about the door in winter, mending the sled and gathering sticks for the fire; or drawing the rake in summer after the moving hay-cart, occasionally surprise you by the exhibition of an activity and strength which you would think they must have for ever resigned. Who can tell how much this latent vigour of theirs may be owing to our bracing climate, joined to the effects of their former stirring life, and particularly to the influence of those preternatural exertions, which they, with the whole country, once put forth in the war of independence? I thought I distinctly saw, in the efforts of those seniors of my native parish to supply it with sacred music, something of that spirit which had sprung to arms, when the necessities of their country and the voice of Heaven bade them forego every personal convenience, and take up their march to Charlestown, to Cambridge, and to the height of Dorchester. Ye laurelled old men! Ye saviours

of your country, and authors of unimaginable blessings for your posterity! Ye shall not descend to your graves, without the fervent thanks, the feeble tribute of one, who often in his thought refers his political enjoyments and hopes to your principles, your valour, and your blood!

How soon will it be ere a revolutionary veteran will be seen no more among us! It is with a feeling of melancholy and desolation that I perceive their number irrevocably lessening every year. We do not half enough load the survivors with grateful honours. We ought formally and publicly to cherish them with more pious assiduity. Their pensions are an insufficient recompense of their merits, for the plain reason that they scarcely fought for mercenary considerations. Even those who expected pay, and sometimes could not obtain it from their country's treasury, would have died rather than touch the gold of the enemy. On the anniversaries of our independence, I would therefore assign to all who had any share in accomplishing the revolution, a distinct place in our civic processions. The orator of the day should add interest to his performance by an address to their venerable corps. They should be escorted to the festive hall, they should be entertained as honoured guests, they should be toasted, and the toast should be drunk standing, and the chaplain of the day should offer prayers for their long and uninterrupted happiness, both in this world and the next.

But this last idea brings me round again to the reverend choir, on which was fastened the other

end of my chain of patriotic reflections. Those of my readers, who are interested as much in the links of a dynasty as in the more general facts of a history, may wish to know who was regarded as the leader among that group of antiques. And the question is pertinent enough. For although they were too far advanced in years beyond the miserable vanities of musical pretension, and were now too much on a level in point of abilities or skill, to be actuated by any aspiring ambition, yet they had also too much experience in the affairs of life, not to be aware of the necessity of some ostensible head, in order to manage even the humblest and most common concern with requisite harmony and effect. The person, therefore, whom rather by a tacit, reciprocal understanding, than any formal nomination or elective acclamation, they made choice of for their conductor, was Colonel John Wilkins, otherwise called Colonel John Ticonderoga, the veteran, whose hoary locks were above described, and who had been the first to suggest to the others this laudable scheme. Let those who take pride in such humble matters as dates and names, remember him, therefore, as the sixth leader of the choir at Waterfield, whose acts are recorded in this faithful chronicle.

My engagement in New Hampshire having expired, I returned home to pursue my studies. Affairs had, by this time, assumed a much brighter aspect. I found, on my arrival, that nearly all the females belonging to the late choir, had volunteered a renewal of their delightful services. How difficult it is for woman to persevere in error! Though

physically speaking the weaker party, yet how often she resists the sinister example of the other sex, and proves herself superior in the strength of her moral powers. The fair ones of my native parish were the first to perceive the unhappy mistake into which they had been betrayed, and the first to acknowledge and practically retract it. Candor requires me to make these statements and reflections, though it were much to be wished that the occasion for it never had existed. But I was willing to forget all the resentment with which I had before wondered at their conduct, when I contemplated the novel and beautiful spectacle that now charmed my imagination. Show me a more interesting picture than reverend and trembling age associated with blooming and youthful beauty in chanting the praises of their common Creator. It struck me as an instance of a kind of *moral counterpoint*, more thrilling to the soul than the sweetest or the grandest harmony of mere sound. Willingly would I have refrained from interposing my indifferent voice, had not duty and persuasion united to re-conduct me to the seats.

The experience of life certainly brings every man into strange combinations and juxta-positions with his fellow beings. Yet, was not mine at the present time rather peculiar? What fate, what hidden sympathy, what kindred gravity of character, drew me into special personal contact and co-operation with four of the most reverend seniors of the land? The contemplation of this new attitude of my presiding genius, had sometimes almost too powerful

an effect on my imagination. I began to entertain doubts of my own age. At times I thought it my duty to study a new system of ethics and manners, corresponding to my situation. I wished occasionally that Cicero's Treatise on Old Age might be substituted in place of his Orations against Catiline, which I was then reading, as preparatory to my admission into college.

But the dreams of this whimsical hallucination soon fled away, as the months advanced, and Mr. Welby's voice regained its usual health and mellowness, and my venerated fathers in harmony found it too much for their comfort to ascend the stairs on the enfeebling days of spring. Besides, if any thing could have restrained the peculiar wanderings of my mind above described, it was the condition in which I was now left. Exposed singly to the fire of a whole battery of eyes and voices from the flower of the parish, and compelled, by my very duty, to maintain constant communications and consultations with them, I was soon reminded, by certain indescribably interesting and perplexing feelings in my breast, that I had many years yet to pass, before I could aspire to the honours, the abstracted attention, and the composure of old age.

But though I pretend not to have been exempt from the susceptibilities now alluded to, I call on every scrutinizing spectator, (there having been several of that character at church) to bear witness to the unremitted propriety of my deportment during the summer and autumn which I passed in that critical situation. No manifestation of partialities,

no enconragement of female frivolities, and no unfeeling neglect or inattention, that I have ever heard of or imagined, were, or could be laid to my charge. Our singing, I may confidently say without undue self-flattery, continued to be of no ordinary merit, though we could not welcome one accession to my own side of the choir. Several strong and rich voices on the other side, took the tenor or air of each tune, the rest of them united in a melodious treble, and Mr. Welby and myself put forth our whole vocal powers in supporting them with the bass. Such was the uninterrupted method we pursued, until the approach of winter again called me to a distant place, to replenish my little funds with the emoluments of a district schoolmaster.

The destinies of our choir were now provided for in a manner, somewhat remarkable, but not, I believe, altogether unexampled elsewhere in our country. The first intention of the ladies was to leave the seats immediately after my departure. Had it been executed, every thing might have been thrown back into the deplorable condition in which I had left affairs the preceding winter. Two of my late venerable fellow-choristers were now already gathered to the land of silence, and there were no hopes of obtaining a leader from any quarter. In this emergency, Mrs. Martha Shrinknot proffered her services, and undertook the management of the whole department, until I should myself return and resume it. She was a lady, not much past the age of thirty years. Being of an active and inquisitive turn of mind, she had long since made herself

acquainted with the mysteries of setting a psalm tune, knew its key-note at a glance, and had frequently, on private occasions, even before her marriage, given out the leading tones to the different parts, when passing an evening with a few musical friends, who preferred extracting an hour of rational pleasure from the Village Harmony, to the frivolous entertainments of cards, coquetry, and scandal.

It might be out of place here, to follow Mrs. Martha Shrinknot home, and exhibit her superintending the best ordered family, and the most profitable dairy in the county. My concern with her now is in her public capacity, and I may say with truth, that a leader of more accuracy, more judgment, more self-possession, and more spirited energy, never took charge of the Waterfield choir, nor, as I think, of any other.

Her outset on the first Sabbath succeeded to admiration; and there was every prospect that her reign, though short, would be one of uninterrupted brilliancy and felicity. But an ill star seemed to hover over the spot, and new troubles soon arose to disturb the peace and crush the hopes of the lovers of sacred song.

Among the females of the choir, was a young woman of much comeliness, modest demeanor, and an unsullied character, who had been living in one of the richest families of the village, under the denomination of *help*. I approve the feeling which has substituted this word for the offensive one of *servant*. 'Servant' seems to stamp an irretrievable

character on the person who bears the appellation. It is less general and vague than the word help. The latter seems to admit into the mind a sense of independence and a hope of rising in the world. As long as Mirabeau's maxim is true, that names are things, let the young heirs of poverty and dependence in free America, solace themselves with the substantial comfort of assuming a title, which places them, in imagination at least, on a level with their employers, and soothes the sting which may now and then fret their bosoms, when contemplating the unavoidable inequalities of fortune. For alas! not even will this slight change of name secure them from numerous embarrassments and mortifications, as will be seen in the case of Mary Wentworth, the intelligent young woman above-mentioned.

The singing pew for the females contained three long benches, rising one above another, and receding from the front of the gallery. Mary Wentworth had occupied an unassuming seat on the uppermost of these benches for about three years. At her first appearance there, there had been no little stir among certain of the vocal sisterhood; a few airs were put on; a few whispers circulated; a few stares directed at the modest stranger; and the seats of some of the young ladies were vacated for a few succeeding Sabbaths. But most of them returned, sooner or later, on better reflection, or on a reviving desire to bear their part in the melodies of the place, and Mary thenceforward was scarcely disturbed by any kind of notice whatever. Nevertheless, her singing was envied by some, and ad-

mired by all. To say the truth, she had no equal in this parish, and few elsewhere. Her voice was enchanting in its tones, and astonishing in its compass. She was a perfect mistress of the art, as far as it can reach perfection in the practice of our country choirs. She was fit to bear a conspicuous part in an oratorio, and would have well repaid any degree of scientific cultivation.

Mrs. Shrinknot, who knew not, or affected not to know the squeamishness respecting rank, that was entertained by some of the young ladies, took occasion, on the afternoon of the second Sabbath succeeding her induction into office, to exercise her lawful authority, by inviting Mary Wentworth down to the front seat, and placing her at her own right hand. She wished for the support of her voice, and the assistance to be derived from occasionally consulting her.

On the next Sunday, Mrs. Shrinknot was seized with an illness which prevented her leaving home. She sent for Mary, and after much persuasion, prevailed upon her to go that day and assume the direction of the choir.

The maiden went early, that she might prepare herself, by time and meditation, with sufficient self-possession, and avoid the flurry of passing by others in order to arrive at the post which had been assigned her. She had not been seated there long, when she observed two young ladies, who had for some years pretty regularly attended the choir, entering into a pew below, with the rest of their family. This was soon followed by several other

instances of the same kind, and poor Mary's heart began to sink within her. She looked frequently and anxiously round, in the hope that some, or at least that one individual would arrive to shield her from the oppression of overwhelming notoriety. In vain! there had been visitings, and murmurings, and resolutions, through the whole of the preceding week, and what with the pride of some, who could not endure that a girl at service should aspire at an equality with themselves,—and the envy of others, whose ears were *pained*, (as they used to say, though in a different sense from my use of the word,) with the tones of Polly Wentworth's voice,—and the indignation of others, that the long established order of sitting should be disturbed,—and the pusillanimity of others, who had neither souls nor pretensions large enough to be proud, or envious, or angry, but who quivered on the pivot, and vibrated to whichever side the multitude inclined,—not a bonnet was forthcoming to gladden the eyes of that fair and desolate housemaid.

Yet, though a girl of the most modest and unpretending character, Mary Wentworth had an energy of soul, and a sterling good sense which enabled her to encounter every emergency with composure, and to act according to the demands of the occasion. Mr. Welby, after waiting a quarter of an hour beyond the usual time, and not knowing himself, poor man, what course he ought to pursue, balancing between his fear of hurting the young woman's feelings, and his duty as a clergyman, at length resolved to commence the

services with a psalm, which he read, and proceeded to sing to the tenor part of a tune that happened to be the universal favourite of the congregation.

Mary Wentworth rose and joined him in the same part. Mr. Welby immediately permitted his voice to slide with a graceful and almost imperceptible transition, to the bass, with which he continued to accompany her. The air was of a slightly pathetic description, and thus accorded well with the state of her heart. To say that there was not a *little* effervescence of republican feeling, also, which prompted her, on that occasion, to put forth the whole blazing extent of her musical powers, would be, to arrogate for the fine creature a sort of angelical perfection, and to raise a doubt, whether the institutions for which our fathers bled, have communicated to every one who moves over the land, a sense of individual dignity and importance. Yet, although grief and resentment were both labouring at her heart, her strength of character, and her instinctive perception of the proprieties of the place, suffered no more of either to predominate, than was exactly sufficient to infuse into her performance that combination of melancholy and animation, which is the last golden accomplishment of the female voice.

In fact, she was surprised at the excellence of her own singing, and this very surprise constantly stimulated her to higher and higher efforts. Her situation and feelings inspired new powers, of which she was unconscious before, and inspiration seemed

to create and follow inspiration, like the metaphysical loves in the bosom of Anacreon.

The effect on the audience was prodigious. At first, there reigned the silence of astonishment that she could summon the confidence to sing. This was very soon exchanged for the feeling and the rustling of admiration. A kind of anguish now seized upon the hearts of some of the generous young ladies who had that morning left the choir. They were half willing to be back again there, if for no other purpose than to drown her voice, and dilute the attention so lavishly and improperly bestowed on a human being in the place of worship.

But the impropriety of this admiration appeared to be forgotten by even the gravest and most devout among the audience. As Mary and the pastor proceeded from verse to verse, one after another of their male listeners rose, and turned their faces towards the gallery, so that by the time the psalm was concluded, and Mr. Welby had laid aside his book, to invite his people, in a low and solemn tone, to the worship of God, one half of the assembly were already in the posture assumed by congregationalists, after the manner of primitive Christians, in the hour of public prayer.

From seeming evil is educed real good. The general compassion and admiration excited by the case of Mary Wentworth now presented an opportunity which had been long desired among the singers of the other sex, to return with a good grace to the seats. By going thither again ostensibly for the purpose of encouraging and protecting a perse-

cuted young woman, they would screen themselves from the mortification of appearing to regret and retract their former conduct. Accordingly, a deputation of ten, on the afternoon of this day, resorted to the spot in the capacity of harbingers or pioneers. In consequence of the continued illness of Mrs. Shrinknot, the females generally declined to follow their example, entertaining in their minds an insurmountable objection against submitting to the substitute whom she had appointed, notwithstanding the overflow of popularity which was now pouring towards that substitute. Not a lady, therefore, was to be seen ascending the stairs in the afternoon, with the exception of Mary herself, who came and resumed her former long-occupied seat on the most retired bench of the singing pew, from which no entreaties, or arguments, or considerations, urged by Mrs. Shrinknot or others, could ever after induce her to remove. The noble girl saw the hopelessness of contending against a host of jealous and restless prejudices, and cared for nothing in that place, so much as peace and good singing.

Mr. Welby was still obliged to act as precentor during the remainder of the day. The new recruits for the vocal service, the sight of whom gladdened his heart, felt unequal to the task of executing that function among themselves. After he had read the first psalm in the afternoon, and they had waited some time for him to begin the singing of it, he perceived what was wanting, and speedily commenced a tune. He did the same with the two

other hymns for that day. Mary would instantaneously take the treble, and her companions joined her, one after another, according as they could seize the parts belonging to them. After a few trifling mistakes in the bass, which the good ears, however, of those who committed them, were able immediately to correct, they succeeded in making themselves all masters of the air before the conclusion of the first verse, and then proceeded with tolerable spirit and correctness to the end of the hymn.

On my return home, I had the felicity to find the choir in a more flourishing condition than it had enjoyed for a long time. About twenty of my own sex occupied the octagonal box, and somewhat less than that number were induced by the recovery and presence of Mrs. Shrinknot, and the prudent humility of Mary, to fill the two lower seats of the adjoining pew. These were all in the best training possible under the management of the former powerful lady, who, on receiving the key note from the bachelor-merchant's bass-viol, immediately sounded forth the melodious fall of fa, sol, la, fa, and distributed the leading notes round to the performers of each of the four parts;—that complement being sometimes effected by an animated counter from the lips of Mary Wentworth.

From this time until the succeeding autumn, when I entered college, I discharged the duties of chief singer without interruption. It was a smoothly spun and brightly dyed portion of the thread of my life. The choir was making constant improve-

ments, and receiving now and then accessions to its numbers, as was to be expected from the exercise of regularity and perseverance in the main body.

Very few occurrences happened to disturb the full cup of satisfaction which I was now enjoying in peace and gratitude. I cannot, however, omit mentioning one momentary dash of bitter, that was casually mingled with its sweets. In the middle of Mr. Welby's long prayer, one July morning, the composure of the congregation was startled by the loud crack of a whip before the meeting-house. Two or three of the younger members of the choir immediately rushed on tip-toe out of the singing seats to the windows, from which they beheld a gig and tandem approaching rapidly to the door, and saw a pair of gaily dressed gentlemen alight therefrom. In a moment after, we heard the confident and conscious footsteps of their creaking yellow-top boots ascending the stairs, and on turning my eyes, but not my body in that direction, whom should I behold but my old acquaintance and competitor Mr. Forehead, accompanied by a gentlemanly-looking friend. They had ridden that morning from Boston, where Mr. Forehead was a successful attorney of much repute in * * * * * Alley. They both came into the octagonal pew with the same unembarrassed freedom that they would have entered a bar-room, and took the first vacant seats in their way; but on reconnoitring, and finding everybody around them in a standing posture, they exchanged smiles of some confusion with each other, and arose again. From Mr. Forehead's familiar nod to me, I should

have thought I had seen him but yesterday, instead of parting with him full two years before. I should have returned it with a solemn bow, had not the service which Mr. Welby was now performing made it improper for me to bestow on him the slightest recognition. Their assistance in the tune which soon succeeded, was very fine, and very acceptable to the choir and congregation. They joined us again, however, in the afternoon, and while we were singing the first psalm, they thought proper instead of lending us their voices, to accompany us with a singular *stridor*, emitted through the nearly closed lips, and resembling something between the sound of a bassoon, and the lowest tone of a bass-viol. Some of the choir were frightened, some were shocked, and some very nearly burst out with laughter. My own distress was inconceivable. I felt *haunted* by Mr. Forehead. Rendered absolutely disheartened at the thought of enduring that sacrilegious, though I confess not entirely inharmonious buzz through the two remaining hymns, I retired from the meeting-house and went home. Mr. Forehead immediately assumed my office, for the afternoon, and his friend, at the request of Mrs. Shrinknot, exchanged his imitative experiments for more natural and appropriate tones.

This, however, was the most disagreeable episode in the present poetic period of my existence. It is doubtful whether at length the separation from my own family, caused me a keener pang, than the thought that I must resign, and perhaps for ever, all communication with a little circle, in which I

had lately enjoyed, to so eminent degree, the double privilege of receiving happiness and doing good.

After my departure, a variety of causes, unnecessary to be detailed, contributed to the gradual decline and ultimate extinction of the choir on its old foundation. My shorter college vacations I spent at home, and in vain endeavoured to arrest this melancholy tendency by the few exertions I could make to rally the scattered members. Sometimes I found that a miserable kind of contest had been waged between Mrs. Shrinknot, and the singers of the other sex, who made all the efforts in their power to emancipate themselves from the mortifying dominion of a woman. But they could never succeed, not a man among them possessing sufficient tact, knowledge, and presence, to carry on the business of a leader well. The singing was always decent under her management, but under theirs, it was perpetually liable to mistakes, interruptious, languishments, and helpless amazements. There was, however, no open, clamorous warfare between the two parties, but only on one side the restless attempts of pride to repair its own mortifications, and on the other the calm defiance of conscious superiority. They avoided an actual clashing before the congregation. The lady always affected a perfect readiness to yield her authority, whenever there were gentlemen present who chose to set the psalm. But this state of things of course produced frequent embarrassments in the choir. The bowings and the consultations between Mrs. Shrinknot and the gentlemen, occasioned by doubts respecting the

propriety of particular tunes and other matters, were frequently protracted long after the minister had read the psalm or hymn, and the congregation would sit waiting and wondering for the music to begin. Meanwhile, as was to be expected, several of the least zealous members of the choir, would from time to time steal off from their duties, to sit below, rather than be witnesses and partakers of such pitiable scenes.

The prosperity of my former hobby was still further affected by the introduction of theological perplexities. A flaming young preacher, who carried some points of orthodoxy considerably further than I could then, or can even now approve, had been recently settled in a neighbouring town, and exchanged services one Sabbath with Mr. Welby. Tall of stature, cadaverous in aspect, and gloomy in his address as the very depths of midnight, he arose, and after pausing three minutes, during which his eyes were rivetted on his book, he gave out the forty-fourth hymn of the Second Book of Dr. Watts, in a voice a full octave below that tone which is commonly called the sepulchral. The hymn is a terrific combination of images respecting the future abode of the wicked, and contains, among others of a similar nature, the two following verses:

'Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice hath built a dismal hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there.

'Eternal plagues, and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks, and fiery coals,
And darts to inflict immortal pains,
Dyed in the blood of damned souls!'

On that day the person who undertook to act as leader of the choir, was a middle-aged tinplate-worker, who had recently become a warm convert to the doctrines of Universalism. There were a few of his own persuasion in the singing-seats, and there were some, who thought little of the matter either one way or the other, but who would gladly have excused themselves from singing the appointed lines, if others of a milder character could be substituted.

Mrs. Shrinknot was born to be finally an ultra-religionist, but she had not yet taken her decided part in polemics. Her imagination had been much wrought upon at this very moment by the novel phenomenon in the pulpit. She was already an incipient convert; already prepared to yield up her mind to the whole influence of his manner, and the whole demands of his doctrines. When she perceived, therefore, that a majority of singers in the octagon had come to a resolution not to sing the forty-fourth hymn, second book, nor even a single verse of it, her whole soul was inflamed with the spirit of personal and controversial opposition, and she has since dated her entire conversion from that moment. She turned round to Mary Wentworth, and requested her support, as she was about to rise and commence the hymn, in spite of the fixed resolutions of the other side of the choir. Mary shook her head with her usual firmness, and her friend appeared for a moment daunted. But at length when a sufficient time had elapsed to put the congregation out of all patience, and the young theolo-

gian had arisen again from his seat, and was leaning far over the cushion, with eyes prying into the gallery, to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the delay, Mrs. Shrinknot, at the very moment of her rising to commence the hymn alone, was interrupted and astonished by the following dialogue which took place between the tinplate-worker leaning over the gallery, and the clergyman leaning over the pulpit.

Tinplate-worker.—'You are requested, Reverend Sir, to give out another hymn.'

Minister.—'Why am I requested to do so, Sir?'

Tinplate-worker.—'We do not approve of the sentiments of the hymn you have just read.'

Minister.—'I decline reading any other.'

Tinplate-worker.—'Then we decline singing, Sir?'

Minister.—(After pausing some time with a look of wretched anxiety, sorrow, indignation, and horror, at what he felt was a sacrilegious violation of his undoubted authority)—'Let us pray.'

The congregation obeyed his direction, so far as rising on their feet could be so doing; but had he said, 'Let us speculate on the scene that has just occurred,' his exhortation would have obtained a far more universal compliance that day than is generally paid to dictations from the sacred desk, and would have corresponded with marvellous exactness to what actually rolled over and over in the minds of the audience, while the minister himself was beginning at the fall, and going through the whole body of divinity in his prayer, dwelling at much length

and with peculiar emphasis on the most dreadful realities of the future world.

Of course, during the ensuing week, the parish was in an uproar. The communing members, technically called the church, who bore omnipotent sway in the internal affairs of the congregation, pressed upon Mr. Welby the execution of this rule, viz: that he should begin at the beginning of Watts's Psalm Book on the next Lord's Day, and proceeding regularly through that book, cause every verse of every psalm and hymn without omission or exception to be sung in their existing order, and never should depart therefrom,—Watts, like the Common Prayer Book in the Church of England, receiving, in many parts of this region, an equal reverence with the Bible.

But the measures taken to secure sound doctrine, were ill-calculated to preserve good singing. From this moment my poor choir labored with its death-wound. Occasionally considerable numbers would attend it, and even the tinplate-worker condescended to lend his services, when he could look forward and ascertain that the psalms for the day interfered not with his ultra-latitudinarian creed. But there was no system, no regularity, no zeal, none of that essential *esprit-de-corps*, which constitutes the very life of a band of singers. You could more easily calculate on the weather of an approaching Sabbath, than you could on its music. A visit of Mr. Murray, the Universalist preacher, to the neighbourhood, was certain to draw three quarters of the choir away. Mary Wentworth departed to keep school at Hamp-

ton Falls. Mrs. Shrinknot, disgusted with the moderation of Mr. Welby, who has always satisfied myself with his mild orthodoxy, rode constantly several miles to attend the ministrations of the young divine, who had innocently caused an accelerated decay of the choir. A sense of the unfashionableness of singing at the meeting-house, would at times pervade all the females of the village, and keep them for several months in their pews below. A hundred caprices, a hundred quarrels, rose one after another, in quicker succession, and of more paltry nature than I can permit myself to describe. The very knowledge of sacred music seemed to be fast decaying. No recruits from the rising generation prepared themselves as formerly to take part in this interesting portion of worship. No movement was started from any quarter to effect a better order of things. All classes were sunk in musical apathy. The Village Harmony and other Collections belonging to the seats, were carried off and never recovered. Many of the benches in the octagon were broken down by idle boys who went to overlook the doings of town-meeting, and were omitted to be repaired. A feeble attempt was generally made to sing once on each part of the day, but that precariously depended on Mr. Welby's feelings and state of health. And if now and then a scattered worshipper or two straggled into the seats, it was either because they wished to change their places at church for the mere sake of variety, or because they could call no other spot their own.

Such was the condition in which I found the once

flourishing singing pew at Waterfield, when, after having passed four years in Harvard College, and three in a lawyer's office in the county of Bristol, I came and nailed up a professional sign in the centre of my native village. On the first Sabbath, instinct led me to the spot. In going to the meeting-house, I confess I felt too much complacency in the conscious improvement which the preceding seven years had effected in my mind and person. But, alas! this momentary infirmity was full severely punished, when, on approaching the singing pew, I perceived it too desolate and dusty to be occupied. I passed a mournful day; but better times and better things ere long arose, which I may perhaps be able recount at some future period, when (if my present essay find favor with an indulgent public, and my leisure from an increasing business permit,) I shall attempt the *History of a New England Singing School.*

THE END.

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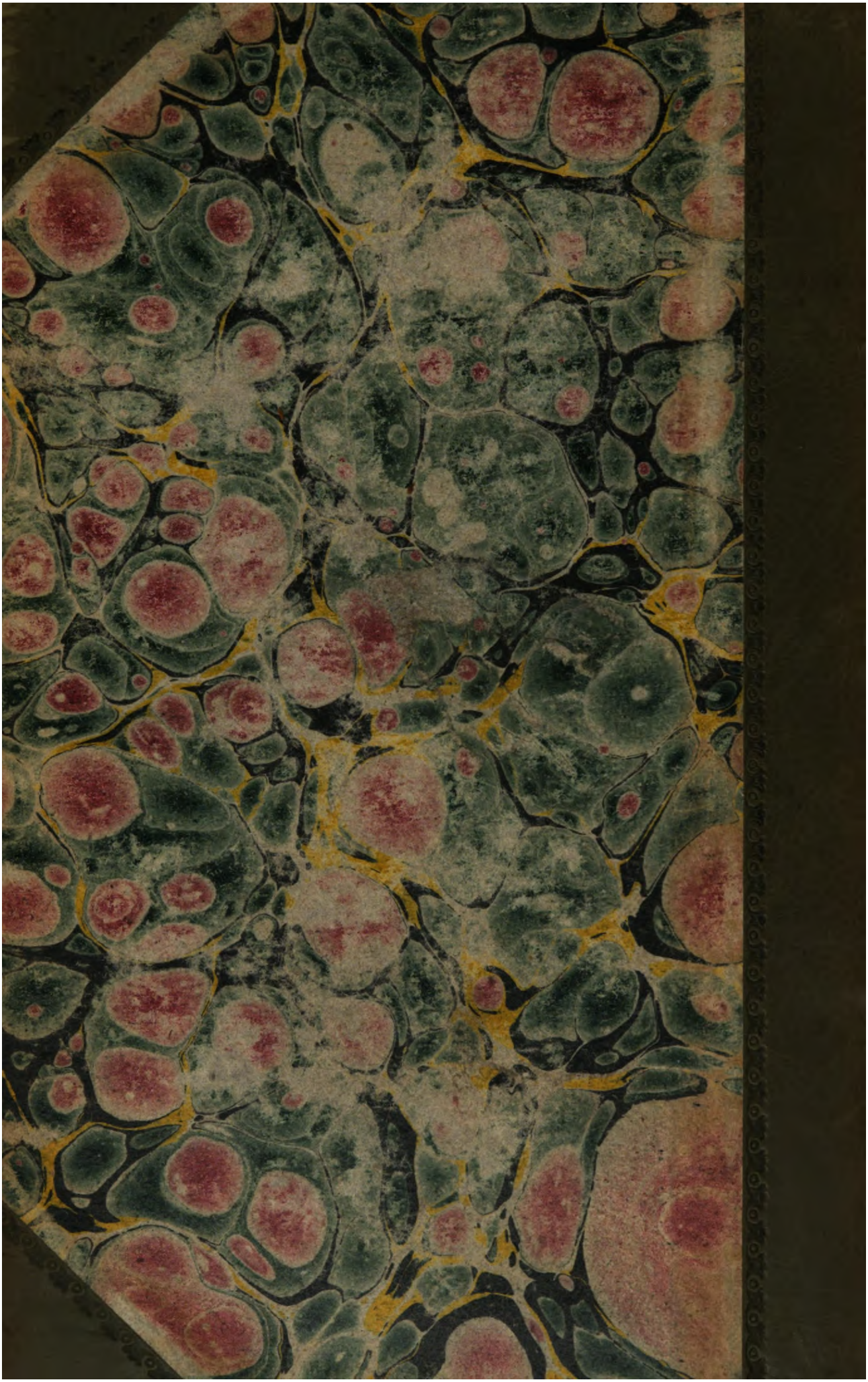
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